



METROPOLITAN SCHOOL  
OF PANAMA

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL



# STUDENT & PARENT HANDBOOK

SCHOOL YEAR 2025-2026



# 2025-2026 Handbook

## General Information

### School's Address

Calle la Primavera

Green Valley

Panama Norte

Panama, Republic of Panama

[Click here](#) to view the address in Google Maps

[T] +507 317-1130

### Academic Calendar

Our school observes an international academic calendar with classes beginning in August and the school year ending in June. [Click here](#) to view the calendar of the current academic year.

### Schedule (presential learning - when in place).

- **Office hours:** Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm.
- **Drop-off:** All students arrive between 7:30 am and 7:55 am and go directly to their homerooms upon arrival. Classes begin promptly at 8:00 am. All students arriving before 7:25 am must wait in the designated area outside the building.
- **Pick-up:** Classes end in the times indicated below. Students enrolled in our Athletic Programs may have different departure schedules depending on the team and scheduled games.
- **Departure:**
  - Monday-Thursday at 3:10 pm / 4:40 pm for extracurricular activities (ECAs)
  - Friday at 1:15 pm / 3:30 pm for extracurricular activities (ECAs)
  - Please see [logistics document](#) for details by grade level

### Website

[www.themetropolitanschool.com](http://www.themetropolitanschool.com)

### Parent Portal

You may [click here](#) to access the iSAMS parent portal or via our school website under the "Parent Essentials" tab [here](#).

## Foreword

A warm welcome to the Metropolitan School of Panama. It fills us with great joy to have you in our school's learning community and become a part of the MET Family. Our school reflects the diversity and warmth of the community it serves. Our families and teachers are from more than 48 different countries. They bring many languages, cultures and educational experiences to our learning community, enriching the MET.

This handbook, though not all-inclusive, is intended to provide our school community with essential information about the MET's policies and procedures and outline our school's expectations.

This document is revised yearly by the school's Leadership Team.

# About our School

## Guiding Statements

### Our Mission

The MET is committed to each child reaching their personal level of excellence through a balanced academic program that nurtures their self-esteem and potential and engages them in the world that surrounds them.

### Our Vision

To set a new standard of excellence for private schools in Panama by providing a world-class academic program in an educational environment that stimulates the development of talent, the formation of moral character and a sense of civic responsibility.

### Our Core Values

Each student has a treasure within, waiting to be discovered  
Knowledge is an instrument for self and collective understanding  
We are committed to educating and forming socially responsible citizens of the world  
Student academic achievement is our priority  
Our actions must be guided by ethical values and executed with excellence  
Respect and Fairness are the foundation of our learning community

### Our Motto

Passion and Excellence in all we do.

## Our School Anthem

Our school anthem was composed by Panamanian composer Ricky Ramírez and sung by Grettel Garibaldi. The school's song can be accessed by clicking [here](#). The anthem's lyrics are the following:

*Con esfuerzo se cumplen las metas  
Que le dan a la vida virtud  
La educación es la herramienta  
Que da sabiduría y actitud  
El colegio es el camino  
Que cultiva mi imaginación  
Metropolitan School.*

### SPANISH CHORUS

*Sueño un mañana (¡sueña!)  
Un nuevo día (¡sueña!)  
Que mis ideas se hacen realidad  
Que todo es posible  
De alcanzar (¡nunca pares de luchar!)  
Tengo (¡tengo!)  
El poder  
Para triunfar.*

With respect, excellence and passion  
We will set the example and stand tall  
With integrity, empathy and justice  
We will build a truly better world  
Inspired by a bright and new tomorrow  
Our school will be forever in our hearts  
Metropolitan School.

### ENGLISH CHORUS

I dream of tomorrow (I dream!)  
I dream of a new day (I dream!)  
Where all of my goals become reality  
Where everything is possible  
And at my reach (you just have to believe)  
Where I have (I have)  
The power  
To succeed.

## History

The school was founded to create an international school of excellence, staffed with the best faculty, where each child would feel included, happy, motivated, and inspired to learn.

Committed to developing the whole child, the MET integrates the rigors of the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Panamanian curricula with a comprehensive visual and performing arts program, Panamanian culture, competitive athletics, innovative technology as well as social, emotional, and physical well-being. The MET seeks to prepare its students to face the challenges of an increasingly competitive world and form global citizens who will contribute towards building a more sustainable and harmonious world.

In September 2017, the Metropolitan School of Panama joined Nord Anglia Education, the world's leading premium school's organization, uniting with other outstanding schools around the world. Nord Anglia's global family of schools share a common commitment and philosophy that there is no limit to what its students can achieve.

The MET moved to a new, purpose-built campus in Green Valley in November 2020. Using best practice in school design, the new building provides our students with a world-class learning experience never seen in Panama.

In August 2025, the MET proudly celebrated 14 years of operations in Panama providing a world-class education.



## Governance

### Nord Anglia Education

The Metropolitan School of Panama is part of the Nord Anglia Education (NAE) family of schools, an international organization with over 80 premium international schools based in more than 34 countries around the world. NAE offers personalized, inspiring learning to more than 80,000 students between 2 and 18 years old. For more information about NAE visit [www.nordangliaeducation.com](http://www.nordangliaeducation.com).

### Head of School

The MET's Head of School, Mr. Lawrence Hill oversees the overall administration of the school and his responsibilities include overseeing, managing, and administering all day-to-day operational activities in compliance with the policies and procedures set out by Nord Anglia Education.

The Head of School facilitates the overall educational and employment processes and implementation of policies consistent with the educational welfare of students and the employment welfare of all staff. The Head also oversees the organizational chart and role description for each position in the school.

### Leadership Team

The MET's Leadership Team is led by the Head of School and includes the following staff members:

Role	Description	Name	Contact
<b>Head of School</b>	Oversees the overall administration of the school and his responsibilities include overseeing, managing, and administering all day-to-day operational activities in compliance with the policies and procedures set out by Nord Anglia Education.	Lawrence Hill	<a href="mailto:Lawrence.hill@themetropolitanschool.com">Lawrence.hill@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Director of Finance and Operations</b>	Responsible for the fiscal oversight of the school and for the day-to-day management of the Finance Office and of school operations and facilities.	Juan Carlos López	<a href="mailto:juancarlos.lopez@themetropolitanschool.com">juancarlos.lopez@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Director of Admissions and Marketing</b>	Responsible for the admissions process and communications and marketing of the school.	Gina Muñoz	<a href="mailto:gina.munoz@themetropolitanschool.com">gina.munoz@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Academic Director (Directora Académica)</b>	Liaises with the Panamanian Ministry of Education to ensure the school meets ministry requirements. Oversees the curriculum planning and delivery of the Spanish and National Studies Curriculum.	Indira Acosta	<a href="mailto:indira.acosta@themetropolitanschool.com">indira.acosta@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Elementary School Principal</b>	Responsible for the daily operations of the Elementary School (Early Childhood 3 to 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade).	Nydia Manzanares	<a href="mailto:nydia.manzanares@themetropolitanschool.com">nydia.manzanares@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Elementary School Assistant Principal</b>	Supports the Elementary School Principal in organizing the daily operations of the Elementary School	Matthew Hoerr	<a href="mailto:matthew.hoerr@themetropolitanschool.com">matthew.hoerr@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>IB PYP Curriculum Coordinator</b>	Responsible for the delivery and curriculum planning of the IB PYP (Early Childhood - 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade)	Shoonit Khoshen	<a href="mailto:shoonit.khoshen@themetropolitanschool.com">shoonit.khoshen@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Secondary School Principal</b>	Responsible for the daily operations of the Secondary School (6 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade).	Brian Brackrog	<a href="mailto:brian.brackrog@themetropolitanschool.com">brian.brackrog@themetropolitanschool.com</a>

<b>Secondary School Assistant Principal</b>	Supports the Secondary School Principal in organizing for the daily operations of the Secondary School	Yarizeth Torrente	<a href="mailto:yarizeth.torrente@themetropolitanschool.com">yarizeth.torrente@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>IB MYP Curriculum Coordinator</b>	Responsible for the delivery and curriculum planning of the IB MYP (6 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade).	Rayesh Peswani	<a href="mailto:rayesh.peswani@themetropolitanschool.com">rayesh.peswani@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>IB DP Curriculum Coordinator</b>	Responsible for the delivery and curriculum planning of the IB DP (11 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade).	Lori Guerra	<a href="mailto:lori.guerra@themetropolitanschool.com">lori.guerra@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Exceptional Education (EEP) Coordinator</b>	Manages the Exceptional Education support services.	Ayra Lim Yueng	<a href="mailto:ayra.limyueng@themetropolitanschool.com">ayra.limyueng@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>English as an Additional Language (EAL) Coordinator</b>	Manages the EAL (English as an Additional Language) support services.	Vielka González	<a href="mailto:vielka.gonzalez@themetropolitanschool.com">vielka.gonzalez@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Human Resources Director</b>	Responsible for the Human Resources Department.	Jezzia Pino	<a href="mailto:Jezzia.pino@themetropolitanschool.com">Jezzia.pino@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Operations Manager</b>	Responsible for the building's maintenance, safety, and security as well as student transportation services.	Edgar Ortiz	<a href="mailto:edgar.ortiz@themetropolitanschool.com">edgar.ortiz@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Technology Manager</b>	Responsible for the MET's technological infrastructure and the implementation and maintenance of system networks.	Luis Granados	<a href="mailto:it@themetropolitanschool.com">it@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
<b>Head of Sport</b>	Responsible for the MET's athletic programs and participation in Global Games.	Daysiree Batista	<a href="mailto:athleticsoffice@themetropolitanschool.com">athleticsoffice@themetropolitanschool.com</a>

## Curriculum

### International Baccalaureate

The MET curriculum is firmly grounded on the principles of the International Baccalaureate's (IB) three programmes — the IB Primary Years Programme (IB PYP, ages 3-11), the IB Middle Years Programme (IB

MYP, ages 11-16) and the IB Diploma Programme (IB DP, ages 16-19), allowing our students to benefit from a continuum of education from early childhood through high school, while also offering flexibility to best reach the particular needs of our internationally-mobile students. The MET is authorized by the IB to offer all three programmes, becoming the first IB Continuum School in Panama to offer this programme in English.

Each of the IB programmes reflects a central desire to provide an education that enables students to make sense of the complexities of the world around them, as well as equipping them with the skills and dispositions needed for taking responsible action for the future. They provide an education that crosses disciplinary, cultural, national and geographical boundaries, and that champions critical engagement, stimulating ideas and effective relationships.

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who recognize their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. Central to this aim is international-mindedness. International-mindedness is a multi-faceted and complex concept that captures a way of thinking, being and acting that is characterized by an openness to the world and a recognition of our deep interconnectedness to others.

IB programs offer students access to a broad and balanced range of academic studies and learning experiences. They promote conceptual learning, focusing on powerful organizing ideas that are relevant across subject areas, and that help to integrate learning and add coherence to the curriculum.

The programs emphasize the importance of making connections, exploring the relationships between academic disciplines, and learning about the world in ways that reach beyond the scope of individual subjects. They also focus on offering students authentic opportunities to connect their learning to the world around them.

## IB Learner Profile

"The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world."

### As an IB Learner we strive to be:

- **Inquirers** - We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.
- **Balanced** - We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical, and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.
- **Caring** - We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.
- **Knowledgeable** - We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance
- **Reflective** - We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development
- **Open Minded** - We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from experience.
- **Thinkers** - We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyze and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.
- **Principled** - We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.
- **Risk-Takers** - We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.
- **Communicators** - We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

## International Mindedness

At the MET we wholeheartedly and explicitly embrace international-mindedness in our daily interactions and in our teaching and learning. We acknowledge the IB Learner profile attributes and attitudes that exemplify international-mindedness and we refer to them in diverse ways at the MET:

- IB learner profile attributes are explicitly embedded throughout, in both the written and taught curriculum.

- Students are recognized when they embody and exemplify the attributes.
- The entire school is involved in an annual International Day organized by our parent and student council with the large majority of students and families participating.
- During the month of November, we dedicate a week to the annual Panamanian Cultural Week (Semana Cultural Panameña). During this week we ensure that the learning experiences have a distinct Panamanian flavor and further our community's knowledge and appreciation of our host country's history, culture, and folklore.

MET students are from 48 different nationalities and come from a range of diverse backgrounds and cultures. The learning communities they belong to and strive to create allow opportunities to develop their identity and sense of place in the world as they themselves shift from languages, cultures and national belonging. Within this fluid and shifting environment, students explore their individuality, their cultural heritage and their role in participating in the global community. The ability to appreciate alternative interpretations and consider different perspectives is a skill that requires commitment from the entire school community.

We believe that education for international mindedness and global citizenship is key for being a critical thinker, and far-reaching and relevant to all areas of the curriculum, in every classroom and part of the school, regardless of age. It is a perspective on the world and how everyone can make a contribution.

## Accreditations & Memberships

### **Panamanian Ministry of Education**

The MET is a private school with an international calendar that meets the requirements established by the Ministry of Education of Panama (MEDUCA) approved under Resolution N° 4527 of August 21st, 2012.

### **International Baccalaureate**

The MET became an IB World School in 2013 and since has received authorization to offer the IB's continuum of programmes: Primary Years Programme (PYP), Middle Years Programme (MYP) and Diploma Programme (DP).

### **NEASC**

The MET is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), an accreditation organization based in the US which assesses more than 2000 public and private institutions from Early Childhood through university. NEASC accreditation uses self-reflection, peer review and best practices as integral components of its assessment process.

### **CIS**

The MET is a member of the Council of International Schools (CIS), a global nonprofit membership organization, which assesses elementary, middle and high schools focused on international education and that have the following in common: a desire to provide students with the knowledge, skills and abilities to pursue their lives as global citizens; a commitment to high quality education.

### **PAIS**

The MET is a member of the Panamanian Association of Internationally-Minded Schools, a local organization that seeks to drive collaboration and share best practices amongst internationally-minded schools in Panama.

### **AASCA**

The MET is a member of the Association of American Schools in Central America. AASCA is a partnership of English language curriculum schools in the region, providing MET students with opportunities in athletic competitions, arts festivals and leadership activities, among others.

# Parent & School Partnership

## General Parent Expectations

We believe that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and parents/guardians is essential to the fulfillment of the school's mission. As an international school, we encourage parent participation in all facets of school life.

### What are your responsibilities for your child's success in the curriculum at the MET?

- Read about and understand the International Baccalaureate curriculum and the goals of language instruction offered by the MET.
- Provide books, software, and other resources to nurture your child's inquiring mind and to take your child to cultural and educational events at the MET and elsewhere that would enhance your child's learning and understanding of the subjects he or she is studying.
- Permit and encourage your child to attend grade level field trips, acknowledging that they are part of the curriculum.
- Encourage your child's development of appropriate values for willing and enthusiastic participation in community service.

### What are your responsibilities to your child at home?

- Support the development of the International Baccalaureate Student Learner Profile.
- Ensure that your child has ample scheduled time and quiet surroundings for home study.
- Talk to your child often about schoolwork, demonstrating an interest in helping the school equip your child with the ability to inquire, interact and accept constructive criticism.
- Enable your child to maintain regular school attendance by ensuring your child arrives at school on time and by scheduling family trips during school holidays.

### What are your responsibilities to your child's acceptance of cultural differences?

- Be a model for your child by demonstrating and encouraging an interest in, study of, and respect for other cultures, ethnicities, nationalities, races, and religions.
- Encourage your child to socialize outside of school with children who come from other backgrounds.

- Enhance your child's awareness and understanding of the world by discussing current events that may be affecting the home countries of other MET students.
- Encourage your child to share his or her own cultural traditions and heritage with other students and attend cultural events at the MET.

## What are your responsibilities to the teachers and administrators of the school?

- Support the mission, values, policies, curriculum, educational standards and disciplinary actions of the school.
- Do everything possible to ensure that your child complies with the academic and behavioral standards at the school and, if your child falls short of these standards, support the school in dealing with the shortcoming(s).
- Underscore with your child the importance of study, homework, classroom participation, and full effort in approaching academic work at the MET.
- Respect the professional opinions of the teachers and administrators.
- Support the judgments and actions of the teachers and administrators of the school by following their recommendations.
- Talk first with your child's teacher regarding any matters of concern in the classroom, such as homework, content of lessons, teaching methods, and regarding family concerns, behavior patterns, or attitudes that might impact your child's performance at school.
- Read all emails, letters, newsletters, handbooks, and other information sent to you by teachers and administrators of the school and review information on the school's website.
- Ensure the school is notified of any changes in your personal and your child's emergency contact information.
- Please remind your children to respect the school, facilities, furniture, areas, take care of them so we can improve and maintain our facilities in the best condition.

## Communication Protocols

### Language

All written communication for parents from the MET administration will be provided in English. This includes school communications and academic documents such as report cards and progress reports. Our team supports Spanish speakers upon request. Parent meetings, conferences and consultations are also conducted in English, although provision for translation can be made available. Supportive to multilingual parents, we are open to exploring support in other languages in exceptional circumstances upon request.

### Parent to School Communications

#### Complaints or Grievances

The MET recognizes the need for proper communications between and among students, parents, teachers and the Leadership Team. All complaints and grievances are initially handled at the level closest to the alleged problem before being pursued, if necessary, at higher levels. To assist in achieving this objective, the following procedures are to be observed:

Steps	Pastoral/Welfare Concern	Academic Concern
1	Homeroom Teacher	Subject teacher
2	Section Counselor	IB PYP/MYP/DP Curriculum Coordinator or EEP/EAL Coordinator
3	Section Assistant Principal	Section Assistant Principal
4	Section Principal	Section Principal

Unresolved Complaints or Grievances	
5	Head of School
6	NAE Regional Managing Director

1. When the issue concerns a student and his or her work in school, the homeroom or subject teacher should be contacted first, usually by email. In most cases, communication takes place through email; however, for more delicate matters, a meeting, either virtual or in person, can be arranged. Issues of a personal nature or questions about a student's program, potential, and progress should also be discussed with the homeroom teacher.
2. Issues that cannot be resolved through a conference with the relevant teacher may be referred to the respective Curriculum Coordinator or Assistant Principal.

3. Issues of a more general nature concerning the operations of the school should in the first instance be discussed with the relevant Section Principal.
4. Issues that remain unresolved after the Section Principal has been consulted may be referred to the Head of School. The Head of School will review the issue, consult with the parties involved and make a decision. Questions about NAE policies should also be addressed to the Head of School.
5. Complaints and grievances may be brought to the attention of the NAE Regional Managing Director only after the above steps have been taken. All requests for consideration of the NAE Regional Managing Director must be made in writing and should include documented proof that the concern or grievance was duly brought forth to other instances without a satisfactory resolution. All NAE Regional Managing Director decisions are final.

### Lines of Communication

Below is a list of contacts at the MET that can address any queries or concerns that you may have. We kindly ask you to adhere to this guide as establishing the correct lines of communication will allow us to maintain healthy and effective communication within the MET community.

All communication from the MET's administration to parents (circulars, events, notifications) will be sent from our [communications@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:communications@themetropolitanschool.com) address. Please check your email filters to include this address as a valid contact. Please do note that this address will be for outgoing mail only. We will not be responding to any emails sent to this address.

Lines of Communication				
Department	Person Contact	of	Contact	E-mail Address
Marketing, Admissions and Communications	Director of Marketing, Admissions and Communications		Gina Muñoz	<a href="mailto:Gina.munoz@themetropolitanschool.com">Gina.munoz@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Admissions	Admissions Manager		Venus Suarez	<a href="mailto:admissions@themetropolitanschool.com">admissions@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Communications and Marketing	Communications and Marketing Manager		Shantal Vallejo	<a href="mailto:communications@themetropolitanschool.com">communications@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Counseling in ES (G3-5)	ES Counselor		Yenisell Batista	<a href="mailto:yenisell.batista@themetropolitanschool.com">yenisell.batista@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Counseling in ES (EC-2)	ES Counselor		Claudia Alvarado	<a href="mailto:Claudia.alvarado@themetropolitanschool.com">Claudia.alvarado@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Counseling in MS	MS Counselor		Paola Jones	<a href="mailto:paola.jones@themetropolitanschool.com">paola.jones@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Counseling in HS and College Counseling	HS Counselor		Mayra Bultron	<a href="mailto:mayra.bultron@themetropolitanschool.com">mayra.bultron@themetropolitanschool.com</a>

National Studies & MEDUCA	Academic Director and National Studies Coordinator	Indira Acosta	<a href="mailto:indira.acosta@themetropolitanschool.com">indira.acosta@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Curriculum IB PYP (EC-5 G)	IB PYP Curriculum Coordinator	Shoonit Khoshen	<a href="mailto:shoonit.khoshen@themetropolitanschool.com">shoonit.khoshen@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Curriculum IB MYP (6-10G)	MYP Curriculum Coordinators	Rayesh Peswani	<a href="mailto:rayesh.peswani@themetropolitanschool.com">rayesh.peswani@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Curriculum IB DP (11-12G)	DP Curriculum Coordinator	Lori Guerra	<a href="mailto:lori.guerra@themetropolitanschool.com">lori.guerra@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Curriculum – ES/SS Literacy Program	Librarian and ES Literacy Coach	Tisha Meadows	<a href="mailto:tisha.meadows@themetropolitanschool.com">tisha.meadows@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Discipline / Academics (6-12 G)	Secondary School Principal	Brian Brackrog	<a href="mailto:Brian.Brackrog@themetropolitanschool.com">Brian.Brackrog@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Discipline / Academics (EC-5G)	Elementary School Principal	Nydia Manzanares	<a href="mailto:nydia.manzanares@themetropolitanschool.com">nydia.manzanares@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Support Program / English as an Additional Language (EAL)	EAL Coordinator	Vielka González	<a href="mailto:vielka.gonzalez@themetropolitanschool.com">vielka.gonzalez@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Support Program / Exceptional Education Program (EEP)	EEP Coordinator	Ayra Lim Yueng	<a href="mailto:ayra.limyueng@themetropolitanschool.com">ayra.limyueng@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Health	Nurse	Cynthia Fouler	<a href="mailto:nurse@themetropolitanschool.com">nurse@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Nutrition and Cafeteria	Nutritionist	Ana Lorena Cortés	<a href="mailto:nutrition@themetropolitanschool.com">nutrition@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Operations & Finance	Director of Operations & Finance	Juan Carlos López	<a href="mailto:juancarlos.lopez@themetropolitanschool.com">juancarlos.lopez@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Operations (Safety, Transportation, Maintenance)	Operations Manager	Edgar Ortiz	<a href="mailto:edgar.ortiz@themetropolitanschool.com">edgar.ortiz@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Finance	Finance Analyst	Janela Samaniego	<a href="mailto:accounting@themetropolitanschool.com">accounting@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Parent Council	Parent Council	Executive Committee	<a href="mailto:parents@themetropolitanschool.com">parents@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Student Athletics	Head of Sport	Daysiree Batista	<a href="mailto:athleticsoffice@themetropolitanschool.com">athleticsoffice@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Student Activities	Student Activities Coordinator	Cristi García	<a href="mailto:studentactivities@themetropolitanschool.com">studentactivities@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Technology	Head of Technology	Luis Granados	<a href="mailto:parentsweb@themetropolitanschool.com">parentsweb@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Transportation	Transportation Coordinator	Gabriela Cheribin	<a href="mailto:bus@themetropolitanschool.com">bus@themetropolitanschool.com</a>
Urgent Matters	Head of School	Lawrence Hill	<a href="mailto:Lawrence.Hill@themetropolitanschool.com">Lawrence.Hill@themetropolitanschool.com</a>

## Parent Contact Details and Student Information

iSAMS is the Student Information System at the MET. It has a parent portal called iSamsParent. This system allows us to manage all of our students' information and maintain open communication with parents regarding student attendance, and report cards.

### **Access to iSamsParent**

You will be able to access the iSAMS login page under the "Parent Essentials" tab on our website or by [clicking here](#). Each parent will create a unique login to access ISAMS with their primary email address provided upon enrollment and will be able to create their own password.

### **Entering contact details**

Student information will be entered into our system through the online application process. Parents are responsible for ensuring that all information on our Parents Web is current and up to date.

### **Updating contact details**

We ask parents to inform us in writing if there are any changes in student, parent and emergency contact information for our records. Please write to [communications@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:communications@themetropolitanschool.com)

### **Privacy**

iSAMS is a secure portal that will allow parents to only view information specific to their children and school wide communications sent by the administration.

### **Support with ISAMS**

For questions or technical support with ISAMS please contact our IT Department via e-mail at [it@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:it@themetropolitanschool.com).

## **Meetings**

You are welcome to visit the school and meet with your child's homeroom teacher if you wish to ask questions, discuss your child's progress and share concerns. Appointments should be scheduled with your child's homeroom teacher in advance via their e-mail address.

Your involvement is crucial to the educational development of your child. For this reason, parents are expected to participate in school events and activities including curriculum information sessions, assemblies, sporting events, etc.

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held at the end of every trimester to provide parents and guardians with the opportunity to meet in person with your child's homeroom and subject-specific teachers. These meetings offer a valuable chance to discuss your child's academic progress, learning habits, and overall development throughout the trimester. In Trimester 3, students will participate in a Student Led Conference (SLC). During this special event, students will take the lead in sharing their learning journey by presenting their Approaches to Learning (AtL) portfolio, which showcases their growth and

reflections over the school year. These conferences are an important part of our commitment to fostering student agency and strengthening the partnership between home and school.

### **Non-Solicitation of School Employees**

All members of staff at the MET are carefully selected and hired for their valuable contribution to our school's learning community. The unexpected loss of any of our staff is an undesirable situation that affects our school operations to the detriment of our entire school community. In this regard, parents agree and commit that they will not directly or indirectly solicit, recruit, hire or otherwise attempt to cause any employee of the MET to terminate their employment with the school, be it for their own employ or for a third party. Non-compliance with this agreement will be considered a serious breach of school policy.

### **School to Parent Communications**

To promote effective communication between the MET and parents, the school uses the following methods of communication. Parents are expected to keep themselves informed through these channels.

#### **Administration**

Our Communications Team sends all communications from our administration using the following email address: [communications@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:communications@themetropolitanschool.com). This address will be used for outgoing mail and emails received to this address will not receive a response. We encourage you to use the appropriate lines of communication as published by the MET to address comments, queries or concerns.

#### **Online forms and surveys**

We carry out surveys to collect valuable information about our community electronically via forms. All information gathered will be confidential and used for school purposes only.

#### **Publications**

You will receive a weekly electronic newsletter called "MET Weekly" with important information from our school's administration as well as notifications of school events and important dates for our school community. It is a school expectation that all parents read the MET weekly carefully for all important updates from the school.

## Communication from Teachers

### Elementary School

Homeroom teachers communicate with parents through Seesaw in grades EC3–5. Weekly Information included in each class platform is listed below:

- A reflection highlighting the learning of the week.
- Reminders
- Photos (optional)

Teachers also send evidence of learning every two weeks and a Unit newsletter at the start of each Unit of Inquiry. There are six Units of Inquiry for the year.

### Secondary School

The direct communication links between school and home in Secondary School are via Managebac. Communication will be on an “as-needed” basis on behalf of the Secondary School teachers.

### Emergency Communication

The Head of School announces the closing of school if actual or potential hazards threaten the safety and wellbeing of students and employees. Some of these decisions may be made outside of the school's governance and dictated via direct mandates from the Ministry of Education (MEDUCA). The school must follow any directives regarding school closures made by MEDUCA.

Communication regarding the emergency closure of the school is outlined below:

1. Head of School confirms the decision of a school closure and informs the Communications Manager and the President of the Parent Council
2. The Communications Manager informs our school community via e-mail
3. The President of the Parent Council informs the Class Representatives in order to activate the homeroom phone trees / WhatsApp groups

## Parent Council

Upon entering our learning community, parents automatically become part of the MET's Parent Council (PC). In this role, parents have to be actively engaged with our students' learning and development.

Parents will elect an Executive Committee to represent their views to the school. The Committee's main objective will be to act as representatives of the parent community and work together with the school to strengthen ties between the school, home and the community.

## Executive Committee

The mission of the MET's Parent Council Executive Committee is to enhance and support the educational experience at the MET by involving parents and our school in cooperative and sustained activities. Its aim is to develop a closer connection between school and home.

### Roles & Responsibilities

- **President:** is responsible for supervising all PC activities. This person presides over PC meetings, prepares meeting agendas, and coordinates the creation of the Parent Council Policy Handbook. The President will hold monthly meetings with the Head of School as well as with the Student Council to discuss ideas for initiatives and proposals.
- **Vice-President:** is the assistant leader of the PC and will preside meetings in the absence of the President. The Vice-President will assist in the preparation of budget and agendas and coordinate the work of sub-committees.
- **Secretary:** maintains the minutes of all PC meetings and decisions, records attendance and reads correspondence. The Secretary will keep track of new business and unfinished business, and call results of votes in elections.
- **Treasurer:** will manage the PC's bank account and keep accurate records of the PC's finances. The treasurer will make a cost analysis of proposed activities and projects.
- **Communications:** will manage Parent Council communications with the school and community aimed towards promoting PC events and initiatives.
- **Elementary School Coordinator:** will work together with the Elementary School Leadership to promote Parent Council activities in Early Childhood through grade 5, and coordinate Class Representatives within the section.
- **Secondary School Coordinator:** will work together with the Secondary School Leadership to promote Parent Council activities in grades 6–12, and coordinate Class Representatives within the section.

### The Parent Council must always:

- conduct itself in accordance with the MET's mission, vision and values
- abide by the MET's policies and procedures
- promote positive school experiences within the community
- maintain a friendly school environment that respects the roles of the school staff
- have a well-defined communication structure that allows for positive communication within the school's community

While members of the Parent Council may present proposals to the Head of School that directly benefit our learning community it must be mindful that:

- It does not manage the day-to-day operations of the school
- It does not determine policies or professional practices

- Members should be respectful and not take the role of the teacher, Leadership Team or Head of School
- It may not overstep the limits of their assignments or expertise

### **Joining the Parent Council's Executive Committee**

Any parent with children currently enrolled in the MET will be eligible to nominate themselves as candidates for the PC's Executive Committee and vote for one of its members. Elections occur every two years and the voting occurs through an online voting system.

### **Class Representatives**

Each homeroom class will have a Class Representative (CR), who will be selected on a "first come-first serve" basis through a registration form sent by the MET Parent Council (MET PC) at the beginning of each school year. CRs play a key role in helping class parents get to know each other and build a healthy school community.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

- Working alongside other CRs of the same grade to welcome new families.
- Managing general communications with parents.
- Help parents by addressing doubts, suggestions, or concerns. In those cases, CRs must remind parents to follow the channels of communication set by the school.
- Support the PC in planning events and recruiting volunteers when required.
- Organizing class celebrations.
- Keeping parents engaged with school events, encouraging parent involvement.

## **Student Expectations**

### **Whole School**

#### **Student Rights & Responsibilities**

To help establish and maintain an effective and supportive school environment, all students are required to:

1. Act consistently in a way that contributes to a positive school climate.
2. Always foster tolerance and respect for all members of our school community.
3. Follow the guidelines related to student rights and responsibilities as set out in the school's behavior policy.

4. Respect the school, its facilities, furniture, and common areas. Take care of them so that everyone can enjoy a safe, welcoming, and well-maintained environment.

The school believes that students, as individuals and members of the school community, should have opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning. Learning to participate constructively in group decision-making is an important part of growing up; therefore, students should be encouraged, in keeping with their level of growth and maturity, to take part in the development of student regulations.

Students have the right to take part in the administration of the school by representing their interests and contributing to organizing school activities. Such participation is best channeled through school organizations such as the Student Council. Student Council activities should be in line with the goals of the MET.

In the framework of representing the interests of the students to teachers and the administration, students have the following rights:

1. The right to provide input to school rules.
2. The right to give input on certain school activities.
3. The right to be consulted.
4. The right to be heard.
5. The right to acquire information.
6. The right to submit suggestions and statements of opinion.

The Head of School determines the extent of the students' rights of consultation and participation.

### Academic Honesty Policy

At the MET, the IB Learner Profile provides the foundation for academic honesty, as it asks us to be principled in our lives in and out of school. The Learner Profile reminds us that principled people “act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.” Our policies and practices regarding academic honesty stem from this philosophy.

### The International Baccalaureate Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate (IB) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end, the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment. These programs

encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## **Academic Honesty: Philosophy and Practice**

### **Philosophy**

The Metropolitan School of Panama (the MET), A Nord Anglia Education School, guided by the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), places great value on the ethical qualities of personal integrity and academic honesty. This policy has been developed collaboratively by members of the MET community in an endeavor to ensure alignment in our philosophy and practices regarding academic integrity. It is reviewed yearly and is published for all stakeholders on the MET website.

#### **a. Our Mission**

The MET is committed to each child reaching their personal level of excellence through a balanced academic program that nurtures their self-esteem and potential and engages them in the world that surrounds them.

#### **b. Our Vision**

To set a new standard of excellence for private schools in Panama by providing a world-class academic program in an educational environment that stimulates the development of talent, the formation of moral character, and a sense of civic responsibility.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Educate the school community on the importance and benefit of academic honesty;
- Promote and ensure good academic practice and a school culture that actively encourages academic honesty;
- Ensure all work produced by students is their own, authentic work; all such work has the ideas and words of others fully acknowledged and properly cited;
- Outline the roles of everyone in the school community in ensuring academic honesty;
- Encourage students to look to their teachers, supervisors and IB Coordinator(s) for support when completing assessed work to prevent any form of malpractice;
- Outline the consequences that will be imposed should students be found guilty of academic malpractice.

Read the full Academic Integrity Policy [here](#).

## Acceptable Use of Technology

We are proud of the fact that we have implemented a school wide one-to-one technology program, and that we have provided wireless internet access throughout the entire school, have installed interactive digital whiteboards in all of our classrooms, and have set up a state of the art STEAM room for the use of all of our students that is constantly evolving and includes:

- 3D Printers
- Robotics station
- A stage with lighting equipment and projectors

With technology, however, comes high responsibility. As users, we are all responsible for the care and maintenance of our technology hardware and software. The use of the school's computers and Internet is a privilege and not a right. For this reason, we expect all users to adhere to certain norms that will help preserve our systems in good condition and will ensure the wise use of our Internet resources so that they will be available for the use of our whole student body.

## Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement

Students and Parents will be required to sign our Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement document which covers the responsibilities and expectations of students and parents when using technology provided by the MET, including the 1-to-1 devices like iPads and laptops. Violations of these agreements can result in sanctions or dismissal.

## The Acceptable iPad Use Policy Agreement

### **Student Agreement - I commit to follow the following guidelines:**

1. I will take good care of my assigned iPad
2. I will bring my iPad to school each day fully charged
3. I will keep food and beverages away from my iPad
4. I will not disassemble any part of my iPad or attempt any repairs
5. I will keep my iPad in its case at all times
6. I will not place decorations (such as stickers, markers, etc.) on the iPad
7. I understand that my iPad is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of the Metropolitan School of Panama at all times
8. I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse
9. I will only use appropriate pictures as determined by the school as a background photo
10. I will not put a new passcode on my iPad or iCloud account
11. I will take good care of my assigned iPad

## The Acceptable Laptop Use Agreement

### **Student Agreement - I commit to follow the following guidelines:**

1. I will take good care of my assigned laptop
2. I will bring my laptop to school each day fully charged
3. I will keep food and beverages away from my laptop
4. I will not disassemble any part of my laptop or attempt any repairs
5. I will keep my laptop with its cover at all times
6. I will not place decorations (such as stickers, markers, etc.) on the laptop
7. I understand that my laptop is subject to inspection at any time without notice and remains the property of the Metropolitan School of Panama at all times
8. I will be responsible for all damage or loss caused by neglect or abuse
9. I will only use appropriate pictures as determined by the school as a background photo
10. I will not put a new passcode on my laptop or iCloud account
11. I will take good care of my assigned laptop
12. I will keep the sound on my laptop muted at all times unless I have permission from the teacher for instructional purposes.
13. I will only play music on my laptop when it is allowed and at the discretion of the teacher.
14. I will not play Internet games on my laptop.
15. I will only use software and apps that are provided or approved by the MET.

## Violations of the Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement

1. **First Offense:** a verbal/written warning.
2. **More serious or repeated offense:** parents will be contacted followed by appropriate, logical consequences.
3. **Continued offense:** Parents will be contacted followed by a suspension of device privileges until a determined time set by the Educational Technology Specialist and School Principal.

Any student who repeatedly breaks this Acceptable Computer Use Agreement will be subject to the school's Discipline Policy.

Items shared through email, blogs or placed on Facebook, YouTube, and/or other Internet sites by students of the Metropolitan School must reflect appropriate conduct as outlined in this Policy. As representatives of the Metropolitan School, students will not submit anything to a site that includes objectionable content or that reflects negatively on others.

### **Loss or Damage of Technology Devices**

All losses and damages to MET-provided technology devices must be reported to the school via e-mail at [it@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:it@themetropolitanschool.com) within 48 hours.

If a device is damaged, our technology specialists will inspect the device and will provide the cost of repair to parents. Please note that only the MET Technology Specialists are authorized to conduct any repairs to the school's technology equipment. Students will be provided with another device as a temporary replacement until the device is inspected and repaired.

### **Costs of repair and replacement**

Technology devices are not covered by the school's insurance or manufacturer's warranty. In the case of a lost device or peripheral accessory, our IT Department will apply the corresponding charge to the student's account.

The manufacturer's warranty does not cover the device or of its peripheral accessories are lost, stolen or damaged due to negligence. All repair costs will be assumed by the parents when the device has been accidentally damaged by the student's misuse or neglect. For example, a cracked case or screen will not be covered under the warranty and is considered negligence. Upon inspection of a damaged device, our IT Department will inform parents of the associated costs of repairs and the corresponding charge will be applied to the student's account.

### **Use of the School's Network**

The MET expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in its use. As much as possible, access to internet resources will be structured in ways that point students to those sites that have been evaluated, prior to use. While students will be able to move beyond those resources to others that have not been previewed by staff, they shall be provided with guidelines and lists of resources particularly suited to their learning objectives.

Families should be aware that some material accessible online might contain items that are illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or potentially offensive to some people. Outside of school, families bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, movies, magazines, and other possibly offensive media.

The purpose of the MET-provided internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as users, students' use must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Metropolitan School. Access is a privilege, not a right. Access entails responsibility.

## Language Policy

This language policy is based on the language principles and practices of the Metropolitan School of Panama and the International Baccalaureate Organization. At the Metropolitan School of Panama, we believe language to be central to our understanding of self, others and the world in which we live. Language and our approach to language learning form an integral and significant part of our educational offerings. We value the learning of language as a discipline in itself and appreciate its importance as a medium and catalyst for learning in other subject areas. At the MET we embrace our responsibility to ensure that our approach to the multi-dimensional nature of language fully reflects and promotes international-mindedness within and beyond our immediate school community. We believe that we have an obligation to promote and develop an awareness of the ways in which language defines who we are and to ensure that this is embedded in our school culture.

## Language in Practice

This language policy is based on the language principles and practices of the Metropolitan School of Panama (The MET) and the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). It has been developed collaboratively by members of the Metropolitan School of Panama community in an endeavor to ensure alignment in our philosophy and practices regarding language learning and usage. It is reviewed yearly and is published for all stakeholders on The MET website.

The aim of this policy is to:

- Educate the school community on the importance and value of language;
- Promote language practices that effectively support our unique population of learners;
- Promote a school culture that actively encourages the learning and celebration of multiple languages;
- Ensure that all stakeholders understand their role in supporting language development

Read the full Language Policy [here](#).

## Language of Instruction

Our school community is multilingual and we support and celebrate the wide and diverse range of home languages and cultures within our school community, with English being our chosen language of instruction. We aim to provide a quality education for our students in English and we ensure that all PYP, MYP and IB Diploma Program classes are taught in English, apart from language classes. Accessing the curriculum requires proficiency in the English language. Given the high percentage of non-native English speakers, faculty is required to implement English as an Additional Language (EAL) strategies in class to instruct students. Additionally, in specific cases, EAL teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to support identified students.

### **Host Country Language**

It is important to us that all of our students and teachers learn about, and engage positively, in the culture of our host country Panama, including its language. We believe that learning Spanish contributes significantly to our appreciation of Panamanian culture, supports our philosophy of being internationally minded, and is in itself a valuable life skill.

In Secondary School, Spanish constitutes our Language (A) for those students for whom Spanish is their mother tongue and our Language Acquisition (Language B) for those students for whom Spanish is an additional language.

### **English as an Additional Language (EAL)**

The model and level of language support provided for our EAL students is determined entirely on the specific learning needs of each student e.g. students may receive discrete ‘pull out’ instruction in small groups or in-class support or a combination of the two. As part of our Admissions process, each student’s level of English proficiency is evaluated, to determine whether or not they will require EAL support and to what degree.

### **Home Language (Primary languages)**

At the MET we acknowledge and appreciate that the development of our students’ home language is central to the development of their cognitive skills. Students who have comprehensive skills and understanding in and of their home language are also likely to transfer these effectively to their learning of additional languages. Teachers at the MET are encouraged to recognize and celebrate their students’ home language. We aim to ensure that our library houses a growing collection of books and texts in languages other than Spanish or English, in line with the home languages of our students.

### **Communication with Parents**

All written communication for parents from the MET administration will be provided in English. This includes school communications and academic documents such as report cards and progress reports. Our team is open to support Spanish speakers if needed.

Parent meetings, conferences and consultations are also conducted in English, although provision for translation can be made available. Supportive to multilingual parents, we are open to exploring support in other languages in special circumstances upon request.

### **Respect for Property Policy**

Students are expected to treat their own property and the property of others with respect. Stealing is not tolerated. A student who steals/vandalizes school property breaks the trust of the community and damages his/her integrity and his/her reputation.

Students should not bring valuables or items of sentimental value to school. They are responsible for all of their personal items and are expected to care for their belongings at all times. All books and belongings must be clearly labeled with the student’s name. Students should keep their books and personal possessions with them or in their lockers. Students must not leave any of their belongings around the school campus and should not bring significant amounts of money to school with them.

The school is not responsible for damage or loss of personal items on the school campus.

### Lost and Found

It is important that all students have all items of clothing properly labeled. This enables found items to be returned to the rightful owner. If students lose personal items of clothing or property, they should first check the areas they have been working in/playing in before approaching a member of staff. Any items found are held in the Elementary or Secondary administrative offices. On Parent-Teacher Conference Days, items are displayed near the main office for parents to check.

Lost and found items are kept by the school until the end of the trimester, after which all unclaimed items will be donated to a charity.

### School Uniform and Dress Code

The purpose of the dress code is to ensure that students dress appropriately for the school environment and in such a way as to express pride in themselves and their school. As a school, our goal is to build a strong and united family through the dress code.

#### Formal Uniform

The school uniform is compulsory for all MET students. Clothing must be clean, in good repair and worn neatly. Uniforms consist of red, cyan, white and navy polo shirts, with khaki shorts or pants depending on the grade level. MET sweaters are optional for all students.

Grade Level	Formal Uniform
Early Childhood 3 - Kinder	- Khaki shorts and red polo shirt, or Red polo shirt & long navy pants
1 <sup>st</sup> - 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Khaki skirt (knee-length)/shorts & cyan Polo shirt or cyan polo shirt and long navy pants Khaki shorts and cyan polo shirt / cyan polo shirt and long navy pants

	<i>P.E. (Physical Education) -Gray V-neck dry fast t-shirt &amp; Navy mesh P.E. shorts without pockets or long navy microfiber pants.</i>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Khaki skirt (knee-length)/short or pants and cyan polo shirt/ / cyan polo shirt and long navy pants Khaki pants and cyan polo shirt/ / cyan polo shirt and long navy pants <i>P.E. (Physical Education) -Gray V-neck dry fast t-shirt &amp; Navy mesh P.E. shorts without pockets or long navy microfiber pants.</i>
6 <sup>th</sup> - 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Khaki skirt (knee-length)/or pants, or long navy pants and white polo shirt Khaki pants or long navy pants and white polo shirt <i>P.E. (Physical Education) -Gray V-neck dry fast t-shirt &amp; Navy mesh P.E. shorts without pockets or long navy microfiber pants.</i>
11 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Khaki skirt (knee-length)/or pants or long navy pants and navy polo shirt Khaki pants or long navy pants and navy polo shirt

## Shoes

Students should wear comfortable shoes for learning. No crocs, high heels, boots, or flip flops will be allowed.

## Physical Education Uniform

Elementary students are expected to wear the MET Physical Education uniform. This consists of blue shorts and a MET gray T-shirt (cotton or dry-fit material) with appropriate footwear (e.g. sneakers with appropriate arch support). All students should come to school already wearing their P.E. uniform on the day they have P.E. class and team sports. From 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade and up, students participating in a sports after school activity must come dressed in full school uniform and change before their after-school class (unless they were already in P.E. uniform that particular day).

Secondary School students are expected to wear the school's long sports navy pants on P.E. days when they are walking around campus and in non-P.E. lessons. For P.E., team sports and extra-curricular sports classes, they may wear the long sports pants and or any dark blue shorts.

## Hats

All Elementary School students must wear a hat during recess/lunch while on the school field. Parents may purchase any type of hat for their child as long as it provides them with good sun coverage. Any student without a hat must play inside or in outside covered areas like the Gym.

All Secondary students may wear hats during PE classes. They're encouraged to wear hats when having PE classes outside.

### **Jeans Day (Día Civil)**

During Jeans Days, students may attend school in non-uniform. These usually take place on the last Friday of every month as indicated in our school calendar, although additional days may be announced throughout the year.

Students taking part in *Jeans Day* are required to contribute to the Student Council's funds. Parents must ensure that students come to school on these days dressed in age and school-appropriate clothing that is in good taste and suitable for learning.

### **Dress Code Violations**

All students at school must attend daily wearing the required uniform. Teachers and professors will ensure compliance with this rule. Uniforms must be neat and in good condition.

The daily school uniform for preschool, primary, and secondary sections must strictly adhere to the model presented by the School's Administration through the Admissions Department, which is responsible for ensuring and providing accurate and clear information regarding the description and use of the uniform.

The dress code for students is as follows:

- The appropriate section polo, as established by the school. - The appropriate section pants, as established by the school.
- A skirt that is knee-length.
- Footwear as established by the school.
- Hair must be neatly styled. Double-tone styles, Mohawk or punk cuts, partially or fully shaved heads, highlights or streaks in bright colors (green, red, purple, or other striking colors) are not allowed.
- Excessive makeup and decorated nails are not permitted.

### **Physical Education Uniform**

- Students must wear the full Physical Education uniform on the days they have this class, their dance class, or any other scheduled activity.
- The uniform will be established by the School Administration, published on the institution's website, and provided to parents during the enrollment process by the Admissions Department each school year.

### **Jeans Day / Día Civil**

Students may wear regular clothing while adhering to the following rules issued by the School Administration.

The following are not allowed:

- Sleeveless shirts or tank tops.
- Shirts or tops that are too short, revealing the waist or navel.
- Skirts or pants that are too short, revealing underwear.
- Flip-flops or crocs.
- Shoes with wheels.
- Ripped jeans.

The Section Principal makes the final decision if there are any questions of interpretation of the dress code. The following steps will be taken if a student fails to comply with the school's dress code.

1. A student will be asked to correct his or her dress code (if inappropriate e.g. change into correct attire)
2. Parents may be called to bring proper clothing to school.
3. In extreme cases, a parent may be called to collect a student from the school campus. For repeated disregard of the dress code, the school behavior policy will apply.

# Elementary School Expectations

## Elementary School Daily Routine

### Arrival Time

Respecting time at the MET is a way of showing respect to others. All Elementary classes begin at 8:00am. Students are expected to arrive between 7:30am and 7:55am. All students should go directly to their homeroom upon arriving at the MET.

We ask that parents do not drop off students before 7:25am as there is no supervision for students before this time. Any students who arrive before 7:25am must wait in a designated area. Early Childhood students may go directly to their homerooms at 7:30am.

### Late Arrivals

If a student in Elementary School arrives after 8:00am, they must report to the front desk in the main lobby to be registered there before going to their homeroom.

## Elementary School Attendance

### Absences

Regular attendance in school is integral in the teaching-learning process. Classroom activities, discussions, group work, presentations, and assessments all vital to our inquiry approach cannot be duplicated outside school. Given the value we place on attendance, we have established the following policies and procedures to help ensure students attend regularly and punctually.

Any absence due to illness or injury should be communicated via email to your child's homeroom teacher by 8:30 am. If the absent student regularly travels by school bus, the parents or guardian must also contact the transport coordinator at [bus@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:bus@themetropolitanschool.com) by 8:30 am, via email. If a child is absent for more than three days due to illness or injury, a medical note must be presented to the school nurse upon return to school.

### Excused Absences and Tardiness

An absence or tardiness will be marked as "excused" if it is due to illness or injury, a family emergency, visa requirements, or the observance of a religious event. Requests for absences or tardiness due to visa requirements, family emergencies, or religious events must be communicated in writing and authorized by the relevant section Principal. Please make your requests at least one week prior to the event. Extended holidays will be considered "unexcused absences."

### **Unexcused Absences and Tardiness**

If a student has 50% or more unexcused absences per class during a trimester, the student is not entitled to a subject grade. However, the student may be eligible for a grade if they have completed two thirds of the assigned work or at least 50% of the grades have been registered.

In exceptional cases and with prior authorization from the relevant section Principal, a teacher can assign a student work that must be done at home to complete the minimum requirements for the trimester. Unexcused tardiness will be reflected in the student's report card.

### **Elementary School Reporting to Parents**

Communicating to parents about the progress and attainment of their children happens in a variety of formats throughout the year:

#### **Conferencing & Reporting Schedule**

- November: Trimester 1 Reports and Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences in Grades 2-5 and Parent-Teacher Conferences in Early Childhood 3 - Grade 1
- April: Trimester 2 Reports and Student-led Conferences
- June: Trimester 3 Reports and Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences
- Mid-Trimester reports are also sent during the middle of the trimester to let parents know about their child's progress.

#### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

These are formal and designed to give the parents information about their child's progress in areas of strength, and goals for developing areas which need further consolidation. Teachers take the opportunity to answer parents' questions, report on progress, address concerns and to help them define their role in their child's education.

#### **Student Led Conferences**

These conferences involve the child and the parent(s). The children are involved in discussing their work and their progress with their parents. The children, with the support and guidance of the teacher, select what it is they wish to show and discuss with their parents. Parents are provided with the opportunity to see how and what children have learnt through the variety of learning experiences that have been provided. The children reflect and consolidate their progress and share the responsibility of informing their parents.

### **Standardized Testing Program**

Measures of Academic Performance MAP Students in Grades 3-5 undertake these differentiated computer-based assessments in English and Mathematics at the beginning and end of the school year.

### **Elementary School Substitute Teachers**

If your child's teacher is absent, the class will be covered by a Teacher Assistant or one of our substitute teachers. The school contacts on-call substitute teachers who are available throughout the day to cover teacher absences. On special occasions, when a substitute is not available, Teacher Assistants may be asked to be available to cover for teachers for Early Childhood through Grade One.

Parents and outside adults may serve as volunteer substitutes after an initial screening process by Elementary School Administration. Interested parents may send in an initial inquiry into their candidacy by submitting a formal letter of interest and curriculum vitae.

### **Elementary School Birthday Celebrations**

To promote relaxed, allergy free and healthy birthday celebrations, the MET will allow a small treat to be shared in the classroom. Treats should contain low quantities of sugar and artificial coloring. Students can share individual treats, such as mini-donuts or cupcakes.

To minimize the consumption of refined sugars during birthday celebrations, our Healthy Kitchen provides cupcakes of assorted flavors for student birthdays at no additional cost to the parents. This is coordinated with the Homeroom Teacher to avoid disruption to learning. This needs to be ordered a minimum of 72 hours (about 3 days) before the celebration. Please go to this [link](https://healthy-met.com) ( <https://healthy-met.com> and click on "Request cupcakes".)

Parents will need to collaborate with their homeroom teacher to set a suitable date for the birthday celebrations. Teachers use the last fifteen minutes of class for celebrations. Parents need to communicate with the teacher a week in advance to arrange this. The teacher will then communicate with parents of children with special diets, so they can send in a treat that their children can enjoy. The following items will not be allowed in the classroom: sodas, juices, flavored waters, sports drinks, candles, balloons, banners, candy, goodie bags, edible or non-edible treats.

The MET is a nut-free school and will not allow any food with nuts in the building.

### **Snacks or Lunch from home**

Even though students are encouraged to eat a healthy snack or lunch from our cafeteria, they are also allowed to bring healthy snacks or lunch from home. We encourage and teach students to make healthy choices when eating. Therefore, students may not bring snacks like: Takis, Oreos, candies, chocolates, sodas, potato chips, Doritos, etc. Unhealthy snacks will be returned home.

### Elementary School Make-Up/Cosmetics & Nail Polish

Elementary students are not permitted to wear any make-up.

### Elementary School Home Learning Expectations

Home learning will be sent for students each school night from Monday-Thursday. On occasion, however, students may be asked by their teachers to devote some of their weekend time to the completion of a special one-off project requiring extra time.

	Recommended Reading Time	Other Activities
<b>Early Childhood 3, Early Childhood 4, Kinder &amp; 1st Grade</b>	Quick, enjoyable activities and shared reading may be assigned to students in these grade levels for homework. Given the nature of our very young learners, it is expected that tasks will generally take between 10 and 20 minutes to complete.	
<b>2nd Grade</b>	15 minutes	15 minutes
<b>3rd Grade</b>	20 minutes	20 minutes
<b>4th Grade</b>	25 minutes	25 minutes
<b>5th Grade</b>	30 minutes	30 minutes

### Elementary School Behavior and Discipline

At the Metropolitan School of Panama, we understand the importance of developing the whole child, ensuring that our students become well rounded and balanced individuals. We believe a fundamental aspect of this is to teach our students the importance and value of self-control, respect, and reflection.

We consider that respectful and responsible citizenship is a key trait. Therefore, we aim to instill in our students an understanding and acceptance that their duty, to others and themselves, is to develop a positive culture where there is respect for the learning environment. We work with our students to equip them with the tools to act responsibly and be accountable for their actions, to contribute to the whole MET community.

## Principles

At the MET we aim to ensure that our students can recognize the benefits of adopting a balanced, principled, and reflective approach to life and learning, by engaging them in experiences that highlight the value of positive interactions and effective self-management.

We aim to develop in our students an understanding of the individual contribution they can each make to our community and to create and promote a school culture that reflects the care and respect we have for each other and for our learning environment.

We work in partnership with our students, staff, and parents to provide our students with the strategies and encouragement they require to make thoughtful and informed decisions. We strive to provide our students with opportunities to take action that impacts on our MET learning community for the benefit of all.

## Practices & Procedures

We give prominence to the attributes of the IB Learner Profile and aim to ensure that these qualities underpin the expectations we have of our students. We not only address the IB Learner Profile attributes through specific learning objectives in our classrooms, but also encourage all members of our community to actively model them in our day-to-day work and interactions.

At the MET, we endeavor to create personal/social-learning opportunities by:

- Encouraging our students to appreciate the requirements for learning and wellbeing that each student has in our school.
- Establishing essential agreements with our students on managing our shared learning environments and the ways in which we interact with each other.
- Providing many opportunities for students to think and act independently with the wellbeing of self and others in mind.
- Promoting reflection as a means through which our students can analyze their conduct/responses with a view to identifying workable solutions and strategies for improvement.
- After reflecting, students may also be asked to engage in restorative practices, as this helps students repair and be accountable for their choices.

## Intervention Procedure

In those cases where a student's decisions and/or actions do not align with the expectations of the school or where they disregard the expectations outlined in the school's behavior policy, the following interventions may be carried out.

Interventions are intended to support individual students in their personal and social development as well as safeguard the wellbeing of our community.

Stage	Intervention	Action/Measure
1.	Informal Intervention	This is the most common measure. Verbal and informal reminders may be given on any occasion to ensure a student is behaving appropriately i.e., observing the IB learner profile and Responsive Classroom strategies.
2.	Formal Intervention and Reflection Session (1 <sup>st</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade)	A Formal Intervention is given in private and may be in the presence of the section Principal. This may be followed by an additional sanction, e.g. Reflection Session and completion of a Behavior Referral Form, depending on the seriousness of the offense.
3.	In-School Reflection Session (2 <sup>nd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade)	A severe violation of our school Core Values and Beliefs e.g., physical violence, disrespecting a member of staff, and truancy.

Severe breaches of discipline or misconduct (e.g., use of narcotics, sexual assault, bringing banned items onto the premises) or the accumulation of offenses where a student’s continuing presence at the MET might be considered against the interest of the student and/or against the general interest of the school community will be investigated by the School’s Discipline Committee and, when deemed necessary, referred to MEDUCA.

### MET Assessment Policy

The MET Assessment Policy is based on the assessment principles and practices of the Metropolitan School of Panama and the International Baccalaureate Organization. In alignment with the school’s mission and vision statements, this assessment policy seeks to offer a framework by which all stakeholders in the community understand the purpose and practice of assessment.

#### This policy seeks to answer the following questions:

- Why do we assess?
- What do we assess?
- How do we assess?
- When do we assess?
- How do we document and report a student’s learning?

The Assessment Policy will be reviewed annually with all faculty and published for all stakeholders on the MET website. At the MET we use both external and internal assessments. External assessments allow us to monitor students’ learning in a larger context beyond the MET, allowing us to determine how well students are achieving relative to other students internationally. Internal assessments are assessments

developed and administered by teachers. Some of these assessments have standardized benchmarks, and others use benchmarks set by the teachers.

Read the full MET Assessment Policy [here](#).

## Secondary School Expectations

### Secondary School Attendance (during In-Person/Presential School)

#### Arrival and Tardiness

Students should be in the homeroom with books/materials for Period 1 by 8:00am. If students are late:

- € 8:00-8:08: Students should go to their Homeroom
- € After 8:00 am: Teachers will mark them late in Homeroom.
- € After several tardies to Homeroom period or class, students will serve a lunch reflection.
- € For early pick-up, please see a tutorial video [here](#).

#### Absences

##### Excused Absences

The student's parent should use ManageBac and click the link "Submit Excusal" to submit a message for the absence. Students who will miss more than one day that is not due to illness must receive prior approval from the principal. Please see our logistics document and tutorial. [English version](#) – [Spanish version](#).

##### Unexcused Absences

Student absences without an "Attendance Excusal" written in ManageBac or not preceded by an email communication from the parent will be considered unexcused.

#### Early Dismissals

Parents must follow the process described in our logistics document [here](#).

#### Off Campus Rules and Privileges

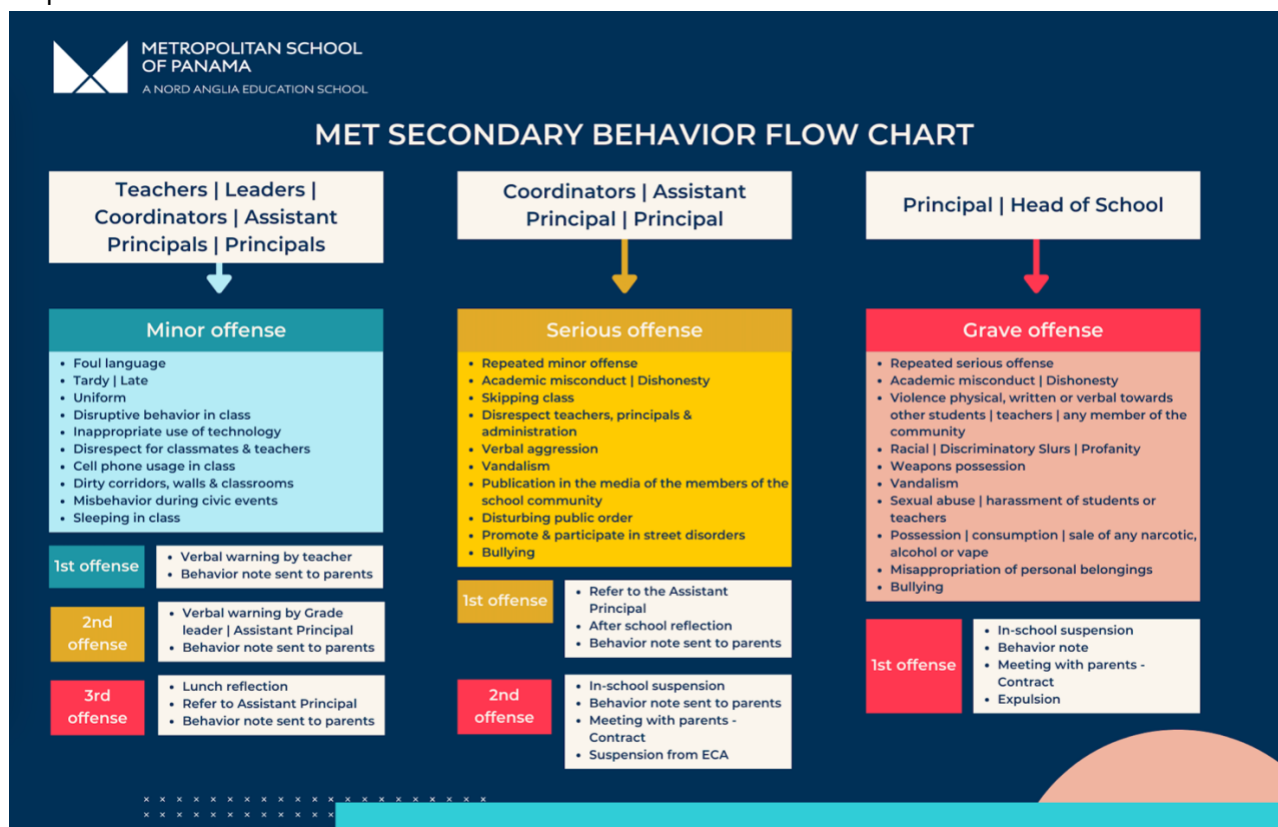
When students are off campus and wearing a MET school uniform, they are expected to represent the school with appropriate behavior. This includes careful driving, no smoking, and respectful language.

- Grade 9-10: No off-campus privileges. Students may leave campus on Fridays at 12:50 pm.
- Grade 6-8: No off-campus privileges. Students may leave campus on Fridays at 12:50 pm.

## Secondary School Behavior Policy

In Secondary School, every decision we make is based on respect. This expectation is applicable to students, teachers, leadership team members and parents. Students are continually reminded to reflect on their behavior and consider whether their behavior demonstrates respect for their school, their family, their community, and themselves.

When a student makes a mistake in judgment, the school (leadership team and relevant teachers) will work with the parents to discuss the problem together and decide on logical and effective consequences. We are striving to instill values and intrinsic motivation for being a responsible and respectful student.



## Consequences

### Lunchtime Reflections, Lunchtime Work Sessions and Assessment Recovery

- These may be given by any staff member.
- Reflections are served from 1:10 pm-1:30 pm in the teacher’s classroom or in the Secondary Office (this is based on the teacher’s/Principal’s decision).
- Lunch reflections may also be served by cleaning the cafeteria and back field (teacher’s/Principal’s decision).
- Lunchtime reflections are recorded in the Student files on iSams.

- Lunchtime reflections are given due to misbehavior/breaking school rules. Lunchtime and assessment recovery are given to students who are not submitting work on time and need the guided work period during lunch or Elective period to catch up.

### **After-School Detentions**

For serious or repeated minor offenses, teachers or the Principal may assign one or more after-school detentions. They will coordinate transportation with parents and inform the student of the specific day the detention will take place.

- € Parents will be informed, and detentions will be recorded in the Student files on iSams.

### **In-School Suspensions**

For grave offenses or repeated minor offenses, the Principal may assign one or more in-school suspension(s).

- € Parents will be informed, and suspensions will be recorded in the Student files on iSams.

## **Secondary School Academic Policy**

### **Understanding Academic Honesty**

The IB refers to academic honesty as a “set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment. It is influenced and shaped by a variety of factors including peer pressure, culture, parental expectations, role modeling and taught skills.” The importance and benefit of exemplifying the values and skills associated with academic honesty will be presented during Academic Honesty practice exercises.

### **Students should understand the importance of:**

- proper conduct in relation to the conduct of assignments and examinations.
- giving full acknowledgement of the original authorship and ownership of creative material.
- the production of “authentic” pieces of work (text, data, art, songs, etc.).
- the protection of all forms of intellectual property – which include forms of intellectual and creative expression, as well as patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights and copyright.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct is any form of cheating in reference to formal academic exercises. Therefore, it involves plagiarism, collusion, duplication of work, all forms of malpractice, and infringement. The IB stresses the importance of **academic integrity** in all work produced by students. Infractions to the

academic honesty policy will not be taken lightly as they can have personal and professional consequences well beyond a student's school career.

\*For additional definitions and **key terms** used in the Academic Integrity Policy please refer to Appendix I.

### **Malpractice**

**Malpractice** refers to behavior that results in, or may result in, the student or any other student receiving an unfair advantage in one or more assessment components. Malpractice may include plagiarism, collusion, or duplication of work.

Malpractice also includes:

- fabricating data for an assignment;
- using unauthorized material in the examination room, including mobile phones, unauthorized calculators or software, or other electronic devices;
- academic misconduct during an examination, including any attempt to disrupt the examination or distract another student;
- copying the work of another student;
- referring to or attempting to refer to unauthorized material that is related to the examination;
- failing to comply with the instructions of the invigilator or other member of the school's staff responsible for the conduct of an examination;
- impersonating another student;
- stealing examination papers or other summative assessment papers;
- disclosing or discussing the content of an examination paper with a person inside or outside the immediate community within 24 hours after the examination.

### **Collusion vs. Collaboration**

Collusion involves working together with other students without the teacher's knowledge or consent to produce work meant to be completed individually. There are occasions when collaboration with other candidates is permitted or actively encouraged. Nevertheless, the final work must be produced independently, despite its being based on similar data. This means that the assignment must be completed in each candidate's own words and cannot be the same as another candidate. Working together is collaboration. Copying someone else's work is collusion. Even if you have 'collaborated' with another student, the work you present must be your own. Collusion is malpractice and will be penalized. d. Infringement is the use of words without permission, infringing certain exclusive rights granted to the owner of said words such as the right to reproduce, distribute, display, or perform the work. Infringement occurs when a student does not acknowledge the sources used in an assignment or when a student passes off someone else's words, ideas and/or products as their own.

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## **Support for the Prevention of Malpractice**

The primary method of avoiding plagiarism is to clearly and accurately acknowledge\* all materials, references, resources, etc., by way of in-text citations and/or a Works Cited page. To ensure comprehensive citations, the student should:

- acknowledge all ideas and work of other people, regardless of source, including the work of artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT;
  - acknowledge electronic media, such as email messages, websites, artificial intelligence, etc. according to the prescribed guidelines;
  - fully acknowledge the source of all photographs, maps, illustrations, computer programs, data, graphs, audio-visual material, etc.;
  - enclose verbatim quotations within quotation marks and reference/cite according to the prescribed guidelines;
  - acknowledge the source or origin of all works of art, film, dance, music, and theatre or visual arts;
  - use plagiarism detection software (e.g., Turnitin) in accordance with the school's regulations.
- \*See Appendix II for examples of proper citations.

\*See Appendix III for specific expectations in the PYP. \*For more information specific to Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence - please refer to the International Baccalaureate Academic Integrity 2019 Appendix 6: Guidance on the use of artificial intelligence tools (updated March 2023).

## **Academic Honesty in Practice: Roles and Responsibilities**

All community members have a role in implementing our Academic Integrity policy's objectives.

### **The Responsibility of Each Student is:**

- completely and correctly acknowledge the work and ideas of others;
- review their own work before submission and identify any passages, computer programs, data, photographs, etc., and acknowledge accordingly;
- ensure that all work submitted for assessment is authentically their own;
- submit work using academic honesty software, such as Turnitin, to avoid any suspicion of plagiarism;

- prove that all pieces of work are original and have not been plagiarized if academic dishonesty is suspected;
- be aware of the consequences of academic dishonesty.

**The Responsibility of Each Teacher is:**

- teach and discuss what academic integrity is within their classroom;
- provide examples and discuss the expectations and assessment guidelines with all students for each piece of work;
- be vigilant for obvious changes in a student's style of writing and language;
- provide extra assistance to students to prevent infractions of academic honesty;
- ensure use of the drafting process to check authenticity and individuality of submitted work;
- use academic honesty software such as Turnitin to check major assignments;
- present any issues of authenticity to the Section IB Coordinator to proceed further with the investigation.

**The Responsibility of Each School Leader is:**

- ensure that all teachers and staff members are provided with and understand the academic integrity policy and the corresponding information;
- ensure that the academic integrity policy and disciplinary actions due to infractions are in line with the pedagogy and beliefs of the International Baccalaureate Organization;
- assist teachers and staff members with how to properly educate students about academic integrity;
- support teachers to select a proper academic honesty program to check the authenticity of students' work;
- assist teachers to investigate infractions and decide on an action;
- educate parents and guardians about the MET's academic integrity policy;
- provide professional development opportunities for technologies related to academic integrity;
- update the academic honesty policy to reflect the most current educational research and philosophies.

**The Responsibility of the Parent or Guardian is:**

- read, understand, and support the MET's Academic Integrity Policy;
- have a general understanding of the expectations and assessment guidelines for their child's assignments;
- support the child's understanding of academic integrity and work to ensure it is maintained in all pieces of work;
- respect and support the need for an investigation into a piece of work;

- support the school's decision and action plan if an infraction has been made

### **Academic Honesty in Practice: Procedures and Consequences**

Due to the differences in the nature of assessments, expectations across the continuum of programs have been divided as such.

#### **PYP Procedures and Consequences**

The PYP is the time to build students' understandings of academic integrity. At all levels, students are taught how to acknowledge the work of others in an age-appropriate way. If a child engages in academic dishonesty of any kind, this is first considered a teaching and learning opportunity. A reflective conversation and/or mini lesson will be led by the teacher. Repeated offenses of academic dishonesty are very rare and will therefore be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the PYP leadership team.

#### **MYP Procedures**

Summative assessments will be communicated to students and put into Managebac at least one week in advance. If a student knows they are going to be absent for an in-class summative assessment, they must notify their teacher in advance so alternative arrangements can be made. Assignments that can be done at home are still expected to be submitted on time. If a student falls ill the day of an in-class summative assessment, the parent / guardian must inform the school and subject teacher, acknowledging their child will be missing an assessment. The missed assignment will be written on the day the student returns to school. Students will follow teachers' guidelines regarding electronic devices when a written assessment is taking place. Only materials for writing the assessment should be on the student's desk. After an assessment has been returned to students, unsubmitted assignments can no longer be submitted for a grade.

#### **DP Procedures**

In general, there are two types of assessment in the DP:

- timed, written class assessments (tests / exams) that students know about ahead of time;
- internal assessments (IAs, EE, TOK essay / exhibition, Language A HL Essay) that students work on outside of class.

For missed timed, written assessments, a principled and reflective learner with academic integrity will have their parents give at least two days notice to the school and teacher. If the absence is because of illness on the day of an assessment, a doctor's note is required to be excused. The student is expected to write the assessment on their next day back in school, as organized with the teacher or program Coordinator. Non-compliance with producing a medical certificate is grounds for removal from the DP.

For suspected academic integrity issues on internal assessments, the below Procedures and Consequences will be followed.

An investigation of suspected or proven malpractice will obey the following procedures:

1. An IB member of staff identifies material that is suspected of academic dishonesty, presents it to the IB Section Coordinator, and provides evidence to justify the suspicion.
2. The IB Section Coordinator immediately informs the Secondary Principal that a student is being investigated.
3. The student is informed that there are doubts about the authorship of his/her work.
4. The IB Coordinator will inform the parent or guardian of the investigation.
5. The student will be interviewed by the IB Coordinator. During this meeting, the student will:
  - be shown the evidence and be invited to present an explanation or defense;
  - have a right to see evidence, statements, reports, and correspondence about the case;
  - be given a copy of the Regulations and his/her attention will be drawn to the articles that concern malpractice;
  - be given sufficient time to prepare a response to the allegation.
6. If the student agrees that the work is not his/her own, consequences will be followed as stated in the consequences section below.
7. If the student continues to insist that the work is his/her own:
  - the Subject Teacher should be asked to provide a statement explaining why they believes that this is not the case;
  - the student, their parents, the Subject Teacher, and the IB Coordinator will hold a meeting to discuss the situation fully; a record of the meeting will be kept;
  - the student will be asked to provide evidence that the work is his/her own – i.e., corrected drafts, work of a similar style, the standard completed earlier in the subject, or a brief test on the candidate’s knowledge of the work or subject.

Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. If plagiarism of another students’ work or collusion is suspected, both parties are at fault and both parties will be required to re-submit the assignment (if this is the first offence). iv. MYP/DP Consequences may be imposed by the school for incidences of malpractice relating to homework, classwork, and/or examinations. These consequences will include:

	<b>MYP 1 &amp; MYP 2</b>	<b>MYP 3-5</b>	<b>DP 1 &amp; DP 2</b>
1st Offense:	Revise assignment and resubmit. Malpractice noted in school records.	Revise and complete assignment during an afterschool work session. Parents notified.	Revise and complete assignment during an afterschool work session. Parent meeting with DP

		Malpractice noted in school records.	coordinator. Malpractice noted in school records.
2nd Offense:	Revise assignment during an afterschool work session. Parents notified. Malpractice noted in school records.	Revise assignment during an afterschool work session with a maximum grade of a 3. Parent meeting with MYP coordinator. Malpractice noted in school records.	Awarded a zero for the assignment. Parent meeting with Secondary Principal. Malpractice noted in school records.
3rd Offense:	Revise assignment during an afterschool work session with a maximum grade of a 3. Parent meeting. Malpractice noted in school records.	Awarded a zero for the assignment. Parent meeting with Secondary Principal. Malpractice noted in school records.	Awarded a zero for the assignment. Parent meeting with Head of School. Possible removal from the Diploma Programme.

### Monitoring and Sanctions for Diploma Program

Teachers, students, and administration are encouraged to reflect on the work they are completing, presenting, and assessing. This self-reflective approach, coupled with a school ethos which values personal and academic integrity, should result in an environment where the monitoring of academic honesty is consistent, student-led and non-invasive. Teachers do, however, retain responsibility for both guiding students in the formation of academically honest practices and monitoring the work they submit to ensure it complies with International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) regulations.

To assist students and teachers in understanding the importance of developing an academically honest approach to all aspects of the Diploma Programme, internal and external sanctions are in place to respond consistently, should issues related to academic dishonesty arise. Internal sanctions are those used by The MET and refer to assignments and classwork, which do not count towards the award of the final IB Diploma. External sanctions are those applied by the IB and relate specifically to all pieces of work which count towards the final IB Diploma (i.e., internal assessments, final exams, TOK assessment, CAS, the EE). However, an overlap is to be expected between the applications of these sanctions and should therefore not be seen as acting in isolation from each other.

Students will be held to the highest standard of academic integrity regarding the final submission of required DP assessments, including the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge & Language essays, CAS portfolios, and all Internally Assessed components. If any of these is found to be in breach of academic integrity, the work will not be submitted to the IB, and the student will receive no grade for that

assessment component. This may result in no final grade being awarded for the course. In the case of the Extended Essay and TOK essay, non-submission is a failing condition for the IB Diploma.

### **Final points**

Academic Honesty is valued highly by the MET, the IB, and universities and employers. Academic dishonesty is viewed as a serious transgression of the values that the MET seeks to impart and uphold. There can be no tolerance of deliberate academic dishonesty.

So that you have a full understanding of the IB's approach to Academic Honesty, we strongly recommend that you read the full IB Guide to Academic Honesty that is available from the IB Coordinator(s).

### **Remember – IB students are expected to be Principled.**

You will act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice, and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups, and communities. You will take responsibility for your own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Read the full MET Academic Integrity Policy [here](#).

## **Secondary School Elective Program (Grades 6-10)**

Each trimester, Secondary School students in Grades 6-10 will select from a list of 18-22 subjects that are offered by the teachers and some students during our elective period (Wednesdays, Block 4). This list will change each trimester and may include subjects such as Model United Nations, Chess Club, Ping Pong, Taekwondo, Environmental Club, Field Games, Newspaper Club, Knowledge Bowl Team, French, Chinese Culture, and many more. This is intended to give our students the opportunity to explore new interests. Many of the electives are created and taught by students, along with a staff supervisor. Students in Grades 11 and 12 who don't have DP classes scheduled during this elective period may also participate.

## **Secondary School Use of Lockers**

Secondary School students in 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grades will be issued a locker to use for the storing of their personal belongings during the school day. One locker will be issued per student. Students are expected to take responsible care of their lockers and their belongings.

The following policy must be adhered to regarding student lockers:

- All students will receive a locker for their individual use; students may ask for a lock from the office if they wish to use one. They may also bring a lock from home, and then share the lock code with the Secondary office
- Lockers should only be used during the morning break, lunchtime and after school, so as not to disturb classes.
- Students may not share their lockers, keys or combinations with any other student, as the school is not responsible for lost items.
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the locker door closes completely, as the school is not responsible for lost items.
- Students who wish to decorate the inside of their locker may do so but in an appropriate manner. Any unsuitable displays will be removed and reported to the Homeroom Teacher.
- External decoration of lockers is forbidden. Any external displays will be removed and reported to the Homeroom Teacher.
- Any purposeful damage to lockers; e.g. names scratched into lockers will be reported to the Homeroom Teacher.
- Students are required to report all locker problems immediately to their Homeroom Teacher.

## Secondary School Cafeteria Program

### Snack Break (9:35-9:50)

Students must collect their snacks from the cafeterias. They may eat in the cafeteria, outdoor areas or on the bleachers in the gymnasium.

### Lunch (12:50-1:35)

Students receive a warm, healthy meal each day in the cafeteria. They also have the option of a cold sandwich. Students may also receive a vegetarian, vegan and gluten free meal if their parent/guardian writes an email to Healthy Kitchen ([nutrition@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:nutrition@themetropolitanschool.com)). This meal will be served plated and covered and have the student's name on it at the beginning of lunch. The student should collect their plate from the "special meals" section in the cafeteria.

All students may eat their lunch in the cafeteria, on the tables outside the library and Mr. Pineda's room, on the front veranda, or on the bleachers in the gym. They may not eat on the soccer field. Students should take trays with them and return all dishes and trays to the cafeteria when they're finished. They may warm up their food in one of two microwaves in the Secondary School.

Students may have second helpings once all students have received a first helping. They may not take a sandwich and a warm meal in their first helping.

## Secondary School Birthday Celebrations

Students are discouraged from bringing in snacks/treats to celebrate their birthdays. If a parent wishes to send a birthday treat, such as cookies or brownies (no cakes), they should first contact the homeroom teacher to coordinate this. Please remember we are a nut-free school.

## Secondary School Use of uniform and equipment

### Uniform

- Beige pants/skirts must not be skintight. Skirts must be knee-length.
- Long blue PE pants may be worn any day.
- The following sweaters/hoodies are permitted every day: Senior sweaters, MUN, Environmental Club, Varsity Sports, Ukraine Support, and NAE Global Games.
- If a student arrives out of uniform, they should go to the office at homeroom for a note or, if they have no parent note, a lunch detention.
- Hats and gum will not be allowed. Hats may be worn outside at snack and lunch break (not in the cafeteria) and on Jeans Days only.
- MET sports uniform tops may be worn by team members on game days. If the team has a game on the weekend, they may wear their sport top on Friday.

### Jeans Day and Spirit Days

Jeans Day and Spirit Day clothing must be appropriate for school. That means short pants must not be too short (they should be fingertip level or longer); tops should not be spaghetti tops/tank tops; underwear must be covered at all times (while standing, sitting, etc.); and clothes should have no reference to alcohol, drugs, sex, violence, etc. Baseball hats may be worn if they're not a distraction. No flip flops or crocs should be used. If you have PE, you must bring your regular PE clothing to change into for the class.

### Backpack

Students will be assigned a locker; it is their responsibility to make use of the locker rather than to leave their things around the school to ensure the safety of their belongings.

## Secondary School Use of Cellphones and Headphones/earbuds

Cell phones must be off and out of sight from 8:00 am until 3:00 pm in classes and the cafeteria unless a teacher gives specific permission to use them. Students may not call or answer the phone, even if a parent calls. If a parent needs to contact his/her child, they should call the school office (317-1130). Some teachers may require students to place their cell phone in a specific location as they enter the classroom.

Headphones/earbuds are not permitted from the time a student enters the building until he/she leaves. This is an important safety issue. Students must have special permission from a teacher to use headphones/earbuds in class.

## Secondary School Assessment Policy in the IB Middle Years Programme

### Assessment principles and practices

This assessment policy is based on the assessment principles and practices of the Metropolitan School of Panama and the International Baccalaureate Organization. It is intended to make clear to the whole school community the expectations and practices relating to formative and summative assessment in the Middle Years Program (MYP). The policy has been developed from educational and pedagogical values and methodologies and represents a statement of intent that outlines the principles and practices for achieving educational goals relating to all aspects of MYP assessment.

### MYP Summative Assessment = Assessment of Learning

- Formal assessment requires students to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to tasks that determine overall levels of achievement. This type of assessment is described as ‘summative’ assessment. Levels of achievement in summative assessment tasks are recorded as final.
- Summative assessments that require significant preparation (i.e. tests) will not exceed 2 in any given day. This does not apply to tasks such as conducting research or writing essays.
- Retakes: If a parent or student requests a retake of a summative assessment, it must follow the specific guidelines of the department for which the retake is requested (e.g. Mathematics). These subject specific guidelines are based on these general guidelines:
  - all formative assessments from the unit must be completed and submitted;
  - a reflection of some kind (e.g., corrections of the original summative assessments) must be completed and submitted;
  - the retake must be requested within one week of receiving grades/feedback (exceptions can be made with excused absences such as illness accompanied by a doctor’s note);
  - only one retake can be completed per class per trimester;
  - retakes cannot be requested in the last two weeks of a reporting period (i.e., at the end of a trimester).

### Understanding the MYP Assessment Criteria

The MYP publishes a set of individual subject specific objectives for each subject group that are directly related to the assessment criteria for that particular subject group. Each objective is measured by a

predetermined criterion. Each criterion has an applied maximum achievement level (numerical value) as shown in the table below.

Key 4: Criteria for each Subject				
Subject	A	B	C	D
Language and literature	Analysing	Organizing	Producing text	Using language
Language acquisition	Comprehending spoken and visual text	Comprehending written and visual text	Communicating	Using language
Individuals and societies	Knowing and understanding	Investigating	Communicating	Thinking critically
Sciences	Knowing and understanding	Inquiring and designing	Processing and evaluating	Reflecting on the impacts of science
Mathematics	Knowing and understanding	Investigating patterns	Communicating	Applying mathematics in real-world contexts
Arts	Knowing and understanding	Developing skills	Thinking creatively	Responding
Physical and health education	Knowing and understanding	Planning for performance	Applying and performing	Reflecting and improving performance
Design	Inquiring and analysing	Developing ideas	Creating the solution	Evaluating

Criterion achievement levels are described further in a general way by an accompanying achievement level descriptor (narrative). Achievement level descriptors describe the differences in student accomplishment for each criterion and correspond to the numerical achievement level as shown in the table below.

Grade	Boundary Guidelines	Grade Descriptors
1	1-5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6-9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	6-9	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	15-18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates a basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19-23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates a secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom

		and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	24-27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates an extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in the familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	28-32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.

### MYP Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries when converting 4 criteria to a mark out of 7							
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Boundary	1 – 5	6 – 9	10 – 14	15 – 18	19 – 23	24 – 27	28 – 32

Grade boundaries when converting 3 criteria to a mark out of 7							
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Boundary	1 – 4	5 – 7	8 – 10	11 – 13	14 – 17	18 – 20	21 – 24

Grade boundaries when converting 2 criteria to a mark out of 7							
Grade	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Boundary	1 – 2	3 – 5	6 – 7	8 – 9	10 – 11	12 – 13	14 – 16

### Other assessed work in MYP

**Interdisciplinary Units:** The MYP requires at least one interdisciplinary unit per year, though many interdisciplinary connections are made between subjects throughout the academic year. Interdisciplinary units are graded using 3 criteria as opposed to the typical 4. These grades are largely determined based on a reflection of interdisciplinary development and understanding following a meaningful project of two or more subjects. Interdisciplinary teaching and learning are integral to

developing important transfer skills in students. These are designed to encourage synthesis and application of disciplinary knowledge to new situations.

**Community Project and/or Personal Project:** MYP 3 students complete the Community Project in groups of 2 or 3 to address a need in the community. This collaborative project counts towards each student's Service as Action requirement and can focus on a local, national, or global issue. This serves as an important preparation for the Personal Project.

MYP 5 students complete the Personal Project individually, though with the support of a faculty advisor/mentor. This project can be service oriented but does not need to be. It is the capstone project of the entire Middle Years Program which allows students to demonstrate their ability to be independent inquirers. It also allows students to demonstrate their Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills to achieve their learning and outcome goals. The Personal Project is externally moderated by the International Baccalaureate to ensure consistent and rigorous grading.

Read the full MET Assessment Policy [here](#).

## SS Assessment Policy in the IB Diploma Program

Formal assessment in the Diploma Programme is defined as assessment directly contributing to the final qualification. Most formal assessments are external and include examinations or work completed during the course and then sent to an external examiner.

Formal assessment requires students to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills to tasks that determine overall levels of achievement. This type of assessment is described as 'summative' assessment. Levels of achievement in summative assessment tasks are recorded as final.

Final grade generation in the Diploma Programme are subject specific but include both internal and external assessment. In general, 75% of the final grade is earned during the IB May exam session of the student's grade 12 year. Approximately 25% of the final grade is generated from internal assessments (IA) in each subject. The assessment of DP Arts is the exception where all work is completed internally.

DP students are also required to complete the three core aspects of the IB philosophy: the Extended Essay (EE), Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and Creativity Activity and Service (CAS). The EE and TOK have graded assessments that contribute to three possible 'bonus' marks to their final subject totals. CAS is pass / fail but is also a requirement for the IB diploma to be awarded.

Eligibility for the DP is assessed each trimester. Students who are not earning a minimum of 30 points overall (world average is approximately 32) have supervised work periods when they have no class scheduled. Alternative course pathways to earn the MET / MEDUCA diplomas are available.

On top of several formative experiences, a minimum of 2 summative assessments per trimester is required to fairly and accurately report on student learning.

To better track and predict student success in the DP, all students will complete a general and adaptive aptitude online test (CAT4 test). Similar to MAP testing, it assesses competence in Language, Math and general aptitude. The results are correlated to thousands of other students worldwide and their final IB scores. This allows teachers to better predict final scores, assist students with course choices and help inform families with expectations.

Mock exam sessions May of grade 11 and February of grade 12.

# Admissions & Accounts

## Applying to the MET

### Overview

Below you will find a summarized step-by-step guide to our admissions process:

1. Submit the completed application forms along with a payment of \$200.00.
2. Submit additional documents required by the Panamanian Ministry of Education (MEDUCA).
3. Parent Interview and Student Assessment.
4. Our Admissions Committee will evaluate the application.
5. Parents must validate international transcripts through MEDUCA.

### Admissions Guide

#### 1. Application Process

Submitting the application forms and documents outlined below via the website, contacting [admissions@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:admissions@themetropolitanschool.com) for the payment of the non-refundable application fee of \$200.00 per child.

#### Forms

- Online Application Form
- Early Childhood or 1st-12th Grade Teacher Recommendation Form(s). This form must be completed by a current teacher and returned signed in a sealed envelope or sent electronically directly by the teacher/school to our Admissions Office.
  - Early Childhood 3 - 5<sup>th</sup> grade applicants require one (1) teacher recommendation from a current teacher.
  - 6<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade applicants require two (2) teacher recommendations from current teachers and one (1) recommendation from a Counselor and/or Principal.
- Signed Declaration of Sponsorship/Non-Sponsorship

#### Academic Records

- Official school reports and transcripts for all previous academic years must be submitted, including the current school year. While we can accept copies of the originals during the Admissions Process, please note that all official (original) transcripts will be required upon enrollment.

- Results of standardized achievement tests and/or psychological educational evaluations (if applicable).

## **2. Requirements of the Panamanian Ministry of Education (MEDUCA)**

The Ministry of Education requires additional information for each applicant, including:

- two passport or ID size photos
- one digital family photo
- copy of applicant's birth certificate and passport (identification page)
- copy of each parent/guardian passport page (identification page)
- copy of each parent/guardian Panamanian identification card or immigration card (if applicable)
- copy of the applicant's most recent immunization records
- certificate of good health from the applicant's physician (must include child's blood type)
- Upon enrollment, all students must also complete a MEDUCA Validation Process outlined below.

## **3. Interview & Assessments**

### **Assessments**

Children who are seeking entry into Early Childhood - 12th grade will need to complete an admissions screening assessment. Student assessments can be conducted via Zoom/Teams or in person. We have a comprehensive screening process to evaluate the admissions and placement of each child. Students applying to Secondary School (6th - 12th grade) may be interviewed by the Secondary School Principal and/or the Curriculum Coordinator.

### **Language Proficiency**

During the admissions process, language proficiency assessments may be conducted. Students who have limited English proficiency will receive English as an Additional Language support as required. Enrolling for EAL Services will be a requirement for admission and additional fees will apply. Please note that spaces are limited in the program. Due to the rigor of the MYP and DP program, students entering 7th - 12th grade will require a high level of English. Students entering 9th-12th grade will require a high level of English. The school does not offer intensive EAL Services beyond 9th grade.

### **Special Needs**

During the screening period, if the admissions team notes a concern, the Coordinator of the Exceptional Education Program (EEP) may observe the student and/or conduct further screening. Depending on the results from this process, parents may be requested to arrange for a formal evaluation before the student is accepted into the school. We do not have support for students with severe emotional and behavioral disorders.

#### **4. Application Evaluation**

Upon completing the steps detailed in this guide, the complete application will be evaluated by our Admissions Committee. The MET places a great deal of importance on forming well-rounded students of good character whose families embrace and support the values and mission of our school. After the committee makes a decision, the Admissions Team will notify the family regarding the outcome via email. The student may be accepted without conditions, accepted with conditions, denied or placed on a wait list. For those students placed on the waitlist, priority will be given to sponsored families and current MET siblings. All admissions decisions are final and based on whether the school can provide a program that meets the individual needs of the student. Applying to the Metropolitan School of Panama does not guarantee acceptance into the school.

#### **5. Validating Transcripts Issued Internationally**

The Panamanian Ministry of Education (MEDUCA), the legal entity that oversees academic institutions in Panama, requires that all students entering 2<sup>nd</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> grade that transfer from a school abroad, go through a validating process. This procedure is a requirement to officially enroll the student into the correct grade level and must be completed by parents.

### **Admissions & Placement**

The MET is an inclusive school which treats each child as a unique individual. We are committed to learning as much as we can about each child in order to be able to help them make progress based on their current level of knowledge, skills and understanding across the curriculum.

In selecting new students, the admissions committee places great importance on the applicant's potential - indicated by testing, teacher recommendation and past performance in prior schools. We measure individual student achievement against internationally recognized grade level expectations established for each grade level at the MET, but we teach each child according to their individual stage of development regardless of age or grade level, thereby providing an individualized program of support. We also place great significance on placing the child with their chronological aged peer group as we pay great attention to the social and emotional development of the students.

Other qualities are given significant consideration as well. The MET looks for well-rounded students of good character, whose families embrace the values and mission of the school.

#### **Placement**

Age and previous schooling provide the starting points for a discussion on placement, but the student's needs, academic record and the school's initial assessment are other factors that will also be considered.

AGE (by first day of August in the year of entry)	GRADE LEVEL	
	The MET (US system)	UK
3	Early Childhood 3	Nursery
4	Early Childhood 4	Reception
5	Kindergarten	Year 1
6	1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	Year 2
7	2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	Year 3
8	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	Year 4
9	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 5
10	5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 6
11	6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 7
12	7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 8
13	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 9
14	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 10
15	10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 11
16	11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 12
17	12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Year 13

### 11th and 12th Grade Applicants

Students applying to 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade must enroll before September 30<sup>th</sup> due to the rigorous demands of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Program (IB DP) and IB regulations governing the suggested number of hours of study in all subjects.

All IB DP courses are taught in English with the exception of Spanish language courses. Therefore, the applicant should demonstrate an advanced level of both written and oral fluency in order to ensure academic success.

Admission to the IB DP will be subject to the following:

- Results of the admissions examinations
- Interviews with the Secondary School Principal and IB DP Coordinator
- Record of prior academic achievement including the most recent academic report
- The applicant's future educational plan

Students may choose to enter one of three IB tracks:

### **IB Diploma Program Track**

Includes at least 3 higher level (HL) courses, 3 standard level courses (SL), and all three components of the IB DP Core: Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS), Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and Extended Essay (EE). Upon completion, students will receive a MET diploma and may earn an IB DP Diploma.

### **IB Advanced Certificate Track**

Optional for students who wish to take a different combination of HL and SL courses. CAS and TOK will still be required. Upon completion, students will receive a MEDUCA and MET Diploma as well as an IB certificate for each IB DP course completed.

### **MET/IB Combination Track**

Optional for students who wish to take a combination of IB and non-IB courses. CAS and TOK will still be required. Upon completion, students will receive a MEDUCA and MET Diploma as well as an IB certificate for each IB DP course completed.

### **Support Services**

All admission decisions are based on whether the school can provide a program that meets the individual needs of the student. Our Exceptional Education Program offers support services to students with a range of learning needs, as well as English as an Additional Language (EAL) support. Eligibility for these services is determined by an interdisciplinary team that evaluates students' particular needs. Admissions to these services are subject to space availability and incur additional fees.

### **Graduation Check**

12th Grade students are required to complete a Graduate Completion Form before graduation. Prior to departing, MET students will need to carry out the following:

- Return of all Library books
- Return of all ICT devices, chargers, and accessories
- Return of any outstanding school materials, textbooks, etc.
- Locker Check
- Ensure all tuition fees and outstanding charges are paid in full
- Re-submit the following documentation to our Admissions office in order to process the diploma with MEDUCA:
  - Up-to-date personal ID (cédula or passport)
  - Letter of good health provided by a physician
  - Birth certificate
  - 2 passport size photographs

## Tuition and Fees

Parents and/or legal guardians are responsible for completing all payments due to the school on a timely basis, as indicated in the payment calendar published at the beginning of the school year and on the school website ([link](#)). Please note that any late payments are subject to a ten percent (10%) surcharge of the amount owed.

### One-Time Payment

Payment of the applicable One-Time Payment is due upon acceptance and is a prerequisite for the child's admission. The payment options are as follows:

- Those who pay the One-Time Payment in one installment will receive a \$500.00 discount.
- Students entering Early Childhood 3 or Early Childhood 4 may delay the One-Time Admission Payment until Kinder and in three installments. The first payment is due upon acceptance to Kinder and the following two payments are due upon entry to the consecutive grades (G1 and G2).
- Students entering Kinder - 10th Grade may pay the One-Time Payment in two installments. The first payment is due upon acceptance and the following payment is due 12 months after the acceptance date.
- New students entering in 11th and 12th Grade (IBDP) are only required to pay half of the One-Time Payment, due upon enrollment.

### One-Time Payment Policy for Returning Students

The One-Time Payment (OTP) is a lifetime payment - this means that if the student has paid this amount in full and has to leave the school temporarily, the student will not be charged this amount again upon returning to the MET. Admissions, however, are not guaranteed, as each returning student will be subject to the admissions process and space availability upon return. If the student completed a partial payment of the OTP, they will owe the school the difference between the amount that was paid towards OTP and the current year's OTP cost upon re-entry. Please note that having paid the OTP in full does not guarantee a lifetime spot at the MET. All students must go through the admissions process upon re-entry.

### Tuition

There are two (2) options for the payment of tuition:

- Payment of the full yearly tuition in one single payment, due before August 1 of the school year, for which there will be a 5% discount.
- Payment in three (3) installments, equivalent to the three academic trimesters are stipulated in the school calendar published online.

### Annual Enrollment Fee (Registration)

The Annual Enrollment Fee must be paid in full prior to entering the school regardless of the date of enrollment and shall be paid on every academic school year during the registration period established by the MET (usually towards the end of the prior school year; this payment is used to secure student placement for the following school year). Students may not be re-enrolled for the following year if they have any outstanding balances from the current year.

The school reserves the exclusive right to discontinue enrollment or not renew registration if:

- The school reasonably concludes that the actions of the parent/guardian make a positive and constructive relationship impossible
- The family interferes with the school's ability to achieve its educational purpose, as stipulated in the school's Internal Policy Manual.

### Other Fees

Other fees may include Transportation services, English as an Additional Language services, Exceptional Education Program, Extra-Curricular Activities, Athletics, field trips, MYP e-assessment fees and yearly DP fees, among others. All other payments shall be due at the beginning of the month, or as informed by the school administration. Transportation fees must be paid within the first five days of each month.

### Refunds

The school's method of payment for refunds is by check only. If a wire transfer is necessary, all bank charges must be assumed by the parent, if the student is non-sponsored, or the company if the student is sponsored. Any and all refunds will be only made to the person or company responsible for the account.

### Refunds of the One-Time Payment

For students enrolled during the current school period, the One-Time Admissions Payment (OTP) policy is as follows:

- If the student withdraws before starting the first day of school, the school will retain an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of the total amount of the OTP.
- Trimester 1 of attendance: there will be a refund equal to the amount of the OTP paid to date, minus one sixth ( $1/6$ ) of the total amount of the OTP.
- Trimester 2 of attendance: there will be a refund equal to the amount of the OTP paid to date, minus two sixths ( $2/6$ ) of the total amount of the OTP.
- Trimester 3 of attendance: there will be a refund equal to the amount of the OTP paid to date, minus three sixths ( $3/6$ ) of the total amount of the OTP.

- Trimester 4 of attendance: there will be a refund equal to the amount of the OTP paid to date, minus four sixths (4/6) of the total amount of the OTP.
- Trimester 5 of attendance: there will be a refund equal to the amount of the OTP paid to date, minus five sixths (5/6) of the total amount of the OTP.
- Trimester 6 of attendance and onwards: there will be no refund of the OTP.

For calculation of the above refund, a student is considered to have attended a Trimester if he/she has attended classes anytime during an academic trimester, as determined in the school's academic calendar.

There will be no reimbursement if the student withdraws or is dismissed from the school for disciplinary causes or for violations of the School's Policies.

### **Refunds of Tuition**

The MET operates its school calendar by trimesters and as such, once the student has attended any day of classes within the trimester, the totality of the tuition fee of said trimester will be considered payable. As such, there will be no right for a reimbursement of tuition once the trimester has started. In case the full annual tuition was paid in advance, the school will reimburse only the proportion applicable to the trimesters that have not yet started at the date of withdrawal of the student.

### **Refunds of the Annual Enrollment Fee (Registration)**

The Annual Enrollment (Re-enrollment) Fee is refundable until July 31st of each year. After this date, no refunds will be provided. Students withdrawing from the MET at any time during the school year, will not receive annual enrollment fee reimbursement.

## **Transferring or Withdrawing from the MET**

### **Procedure & Forms**

Prior to leaving the school, parents must notify their intent to withdraw from the school a minimum of two weeks prior to their last day at the MET. In order to do so, parents must complete [Student Withdrawal Form](#). This document must be signed by the parents and presented to our Admissions Manager, ensuring that the following steps have been completed:

- Return of all Library books
- Return of all ICT devices, chargers, and accessories
- Return of any outstanding school materials, textbooks, etc.
- Locker Check (applicable to Secondary School students only)
- All tuition fees and outstanding charges are paid in full

### **Documents for Transfer**

Once these steps have been completed, students transferring to another school will be issued the following documents upon request.

1. Reports cards for the current year
2. Student's transcript for each trimester/grade level completed (1st – 12th grade). These will be available 10 business days after the last day of school.
3. Letter of good conduct (behavior)
4. Teacher Recommendations - available upon request from the new school
5. MAP test results - available upon request
6. Letter of good financial standing from the school

### **Screening Examinations for the new school**

If your child is required to sit for examinations for their next school, please contact the Admissions Team, who will help arrange a proctor to administer them.

## **Student Life**

### **Nutrition Program**

#### **Overview**

At the MET we aim to develop the whole child, inspiring in them the commitment to making positive decisions in their lives. Making healthy choices, both at a physical and nutritional level, starts at a young age. For this reason, we have created a Nutrition Program that is tied to our school's core values, and geared towards offering our students fresh, well balanced meals that not only will improve their academics, but forge healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

All of our meals are prepared on site, at our school cafeteria. Each menu item is carefully chosen to offer a variety of fresh, healthy food to our students. Outside food and beverages are prohibited. Our Food Program is included in the school tuition.

Each day we offer the following menus:

- Morning Snack: composed of a fruit and a light snack (i.e. yogurt, homemade granola, cereal, etc.)
- Warm Lunch: a balanced meal to include protein, carbohydrates and vegetables. The meal is served with soup, fresh fruit, a salad bar and freshly made juice.

- Bus Riders snack: an optional snack time is offered for students that request it before their bus ride home. Students bring afternoon snack from home.

## Special Dietary Needs

At the MET we strive to offer meal options for students with dietary needs. Our cafeteria is a nut free environment. Alongside our daily menu, we offer options to students with specific dietary requirements listed below. If you feel that your child's dietary needs are not listed, please contact our Nutritionist at [nutrition@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:nutrition@themetropolitanschool.com) set up a meeting.

- Vegetarian
- Gluten-free
- Lactose and casein-free
- Vegan
- Pre-diabetic diets
- Low cholesterol diets
- Soy-free
- Pork, seafood and shellfish-free

## Exemption from the Program

For special dietary needs that cannot be accommodated by our school, parents may request to start a process to be exempt from the nutrition program. However, if the child is approved to be exempt from the program, this might not imply reimbursement of any part of the tuition. The process to get request an exemption is as follows:

### Elementary School

#### Step 1

Parents will submit information relevant to the child's dietary needs to the school nutritionist and include: a pediatrician's note, laboratory allergy tests, and special menu request by a licensed nutritionist or allergist.

#### Step 2

Documents will be reviewed, and potential changes to a specialized food program will be proposed by our school nutritionist.

#### Step 3

If the suggested menu solution is not accepted by the parents, a second meeting is scheduled with the Head of School and Executive Chef to discuss options.

#### Step 4

A decision on the case is made, and a formal letter will be sent to parents.

## Annual Events & Traditions

The MET holds annual events that are part of the MET community's culture and traditions. Some of these include:

- **Bookmania** - a celebration of reading in the Elementary School. This event promotes an enthusiasm for reading from a young age. Organized in collaboration between our Parent Council and School Librarian, it includes fun activities surrounding literacy which include: a Read-a-thon, a Literary Character Dress-Up Day with a costume contest, and a book fair. Activities may include workshops and special visits from guests in our community.
- **Holiday Concert and Variety Show** - To celebrate the end of year holidays, students in Elementary School hold concerts that showcase music from different cultures as well as holiday-themed songs from around the world. Our Secondary students perform in a fun Variety Show to display their artistic talents in dance and music.
- **Inter-House Swimming Gala** - This event seeks to celebrate our Elementary students' achievements in their swimming unit in P.E. It is turned into a fun event that includes swimming races and fun competitions where students compete for house points while demonstrating the skills they have developed throughout the trimester.
- **House Competition Days** - This annual event in both elementary and secondary engages students in team building activities and fun field games.
- **International Day** - This event is organized annually by our Parent Council to celebrate the international and multicultural identity of our school. Our Parent community sets up tables or "stands" representing their nationalities, displaying items from their culture and selling food and drinks. The event includes a show - a display of dance and music from different countries in the world. Funds raised at this event are used to fund special projects of different student clubs.
- **Panamanian Cultural Week** - This event showcases Panama's rich cultural heritage. During this week, our Spanish and National Studies Department organizes workshops in music, dance, folklore, for students of all ages, centered around a central theme relevant in Panamanian culture and history. To culminate the week, a series of Galas are held where students perform traditional Panamanian dances.
- **Fiestas Patrias Parade** - Grade 10 students are required to march in the Fiestas Patrias parade, which takes place either November 3rd or 4th. This is considered a graduation requirement, so if a Grade 10 student cannot attend in Grade 10, they must attend in Grade 11 or 12. Students who enter the MET after Grade 10 are not required to march in this parade.

## Athletics Program

The MET's Athletic Programs are offered to students from 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> Grades and there are a variety of sports that students have the option to participate in throughout the year.

## Extra-Curricular Activities Program

### Overview

After-school activities are an important part of school life. Research has shown that children who participate in extracurricular activities do better at school, have stronger friendship groups, more sense of belonging to their school, better relationships with teachers and higher self-esteem.

There are many benefits of taking part in extra activities after school. Here are the MET's top 10 reasons for participating in the extracurricular program:

1. perform better academically
2. learn the importance of a balanced lifestyle
3. develop a stronger sense of belonging to the school
4. learn about time management and prioritizing
5. get involved in diverse interests
6. learn about long term commitments
7. making a contribution
8. raise their self-esteem
9. receive good preparation for a busy university lifestyle
10. build solid relationship skills and form positive relationships with other adults and students in the school

We offer a diverse range of activities to students in 1st-12th grade that are grouped into three broad categories: Sports, The Arts and Academics. This ensures that we cater for all learners and the different preferences of our students. Registration occurs on a trimester basis and carries an additional cost. Registration dates, schedules and costs are published on the website each trimester and can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

### Behavior Expectations in ECA's

Below are the behavior expectations for students participating in an after school extra-curricular activity (ECA). You are asked to spend some time discussing these expectations with your children.

#### Dress Code

1. If participating in an outdoor sport or athletic activity, the MET PE uniform, or similar attire, is required.

2. The formal school uniform may not be worn for sports or athletic activities.
3. If any special equipment or attire is needed for the activity, the ECA instructor will inform your child during the first week of the activity.
4. If a student uses the MET Transportation after his or her ECA, and is involved in an outdoor ECA, a change of clothes will be required. Any student who is wet and/or muddy will not be allowed on the bus.

### **Attendance**

1. If a student is signed up for an ECA, attendance to that ECA is mandatory.
2. ECAs are considered an extension of the regular school day. Students who are enrolled in an ECA are expected to attend that ECA. Any student who does not attend will be marked absent.
3. Students will only be excused from an ECA with a written note or email from his or her parents. All emails should be sent to the Student Activities Coordinator, the child's homeroom teacher, the child's ECA instructor (where possible), and the Transportation Coordinator.

### **Behavior**

1. Show respect to everyone involved in the ECA, including all instructors and other students.
2. Listen to and follow all instructions given by your ECA instructor.
3. Always address everyone you speak to in a polite, well-mannered way, remembering to use the words 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate.
4. Come prepared with a positive attitude to every class.

### **Consequences**

A strict policy of consequences will be enforced with regard to the above listed expectations for students to ensure that everyone involved with ECAs is treated fairly and can enjoy each activity to its fullest potential.

#### **First consequence**

A verbal warning will be given to the student and his or her name will be recorded. The student's homeroom teacher will be notified and the Student Activities Coordinator will meet with the student to discuss his or her actions and explain future consequences. The student's homeroom teacher will also notify the student's parents of the transgression.

#### **Second consequence**

The student's name will again be recorded and the student's homeroom teacher will be notified. The Student Activities Coordinator will also contact the student's parents to inform them of the transgression and explain future consequences.

### **Third consequence**

The student's name will again be recorded and the student's homeroom teacher will be notified. The Student Activities Coordinator will contact the student's parents and a Friday Reflection Session, in which the student will be required to complete a reflective written assignment on his or her actions, will be scheduled. The Friday Reflection Session will take place from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. In the event of severe misbehavior, immediate removal from the ECA will be considered without adherence to the third consequence.

### **Fourth consequence**

If the student's attendance, dress, or behavior continues to be problematic after three strikes, this will result in removal from the ECA.

## **Field Trips**

One aspect of student learning that we highly value at the MET is student field trips and educational visits. We strive to extend our students' learning beyond the walls of the classroom and offer valuable educational opportunities in the outside community, as well as bring beneficial experiences from the outside world into the classroom. For this reason, we will organize a number of student field trips throughout the academic year, which we would like your child to be a part of.

All student field trips and educational visits will be coordinated and supervised by your child's classroom teacher and other MET staff members. We therefore guarantee not only a high level of excellence for each field trip but also ensure the safety and security of your child on each of these trips.

To provide more efficient communication between parents and teachers and to minimize the number of parent permission slips, we would like to obtain your authorization for your child to attend all MET organized class field trips. This will include all class-related excursions that take place within the regular hours of the school day. We will notify you of each individual trip, but you will not have to sign a separate permission slip for each event. In this manner, you will only need to inform us if you wish for your child not to attend a specific field trip. All weekend trips, overnight excursions, and after school events will be handled separately. As these events will not take place within the normal hours of the school day, additional permission slips for each of these events will be sent out as needed.

For all field trips organized by the school, teachers are responsible for completing the required Risk Assessments and ensuring that all necessary waivers are properly filled out and submitted. This process is essential to guarantee student safety and to comply with school and legal requirements.

## Passport Adventures

At the MET we offer an extensive outdoor education program. This forms part of our “hidden curriculum” and we have named the program: “Passport Adventures: Explore, Dream, Discover”! As part of our integrated curriculum, the MET offers unique opportunities for students from 3rd grade onwards to explore Panama, combining both education and adventure.

This program plays a vital role in strengthening our students’ learning experiences as they travel to different sites around the country each year. Each location has been carefully selected for its rich natural biodiversity, indigenous communities, and/or cultural history, while also being secure areas that are accessible by bus/boat from Panama City. Students participate in overnight excursions (1-7 nights, depending on their grade level), and are accompanied by MET teachers. The main objective is to inspire environmental and social awareness in school children by developing meaningful involvement with their natural surroundings. Simultaneously, the program strives to cultivate leadership skills, problem-solving skills, teamwork, and independence in our students.

We have designed overnight excursions specifically aligned with the Units of Inquiry for each grade level. During these educational camping trips, students will engage with the environment and local communities in order to explore significant concepts related to the central ideas of our units. By bringing students out of the classroom and into the natural world, they will have the opportunity to connect their learning with real life.

### Expectations for Secondary School





Students in Secondary are expected to attend the Passport Adventure trips, as these are an integral part of our curriculum. Students who cannot attend for medical reasons or special circumstances must submit a parent note of justification to the Secondary Principal. These students must attend school during the regular times for all days of the trip. They will be required to complete a significant research project regarding the area of their grade level trip.

## School House System

At the MET we have developed a house system to further develop and celebrate the strong feeling of spirit and sense of belonging among all members of our school community, including students, faculty, support staff and parents. Every member of our MET Community takes part in house events and may earn points, rewarding achievement, community enrichment, and school spirit across a wide range of school-based activities. This system aims to encourage a real sense of pride and achievement for students at the MET, fostering community spirit and giving the students an opportunity to make meaningful bonds across grade levels.

## Our School Houses

The school community is divided into four houses and every member of the community is assigned to a house. Members of the same family are all in the same house and remain in the same house throughout their time at the MET. The houses are called Chirú, Natá, Urracá and Kantule, named after important historical chiefs from some of Panama's Indigenous tribes. Each house has a team color and students display support for their house by wearing their house colors.

House	Emblem	History
<b>Chirú</b>		Chirú was one of the great <i>caciques</i> in Panama's central provinces in the area southeast of what is now known as Antón. Upon its sight, the Spanish conquistadors were amazed by the agricultural wealth of his lands, and attacked Chirú's settlements. Chirú led the rebellion of his tribe against the invading forces prior to being captured. Many landmarks in the central provinces are named after him, and several myths and legends remain of the Great Chirú chieftain.
<b>Kantule</b>		Named after Nele Kantule, a famous chief of the Guna indigenous tribe. He created schools to educate the tribe's youth in Guna history, and emerged as a leader after having studied Guna medicine and becoming an important doctor in his community. Kantule went to lead the 1925 Guna Revolution in defense of the preservation of his tribe's traditions and customs that resulted in a peace treaty that was the first step in establishing laws that would establish an autonomous status for the Gunas, and both recover and preserve their culture.
<b>Natá</b>		Named after Ngabe chieftain or <i>cacique</i> in what is now known as Natá in the province of Coclé. The cacique had a blooming shire, with extensive green grass for cattle and fertile land for agriculture in the region fed by Río Grande y Río Chico. His town's limits went from Chame to the limits of what is currently the province of Veraguas and had a large wealthy settlement with an abundance of corn, deer and fish. The Spaniards eventually took Natá's settlement as center for further expeditions due to its strategic location.
<b>Urracá</b>		Named after Ngabe chieftain or <i>cacique</i> from what is now the province of Veraguas who led an arduous fight against Spanish conquistadors. For over nine years, Urracá bravely fought against the Spanish forces, creating alliances and joining forces with neighboring tribes that were traditionally enemies. Caciques of neighboring tribes united under his command. Urracá was the only one among Indian Chieftains to force a captain of the Spanish army to sign a peace treaty. Tricked, Urracá was finally captured and sent to Nombre de Dios to be taken to Spain. With courage, Urracá escaped his captors and reunited with his tribe, continuing to lead his tribe for several more years.

## Award System

All members of the community have the opportunity to earn house points throughout the school year. They can earn points every day for merit or they can also gain house points from the various competitions that are held throughout the year. House points are counted and the totals are announced regularly at flag raising ceremonies. House and Spirit trophies are awarded after major competitions and at the end of the school year.

House points are counted regularly and announced during Flag Raising Ceremonies. They are then tallied over the course of a trimester and recognized during school assemblies. At the end of the year, a House Champion is announced, and the winning house is awarded a House Cup.

## School Mascot

The MET's school mascot is the Jaguar as it is the largest predator in Panama and its presence is an indicator of the health of the ecosystem.



The Jaguar is also the largest feline in the Western Hemisphere. In Panama, its preferred habitat is the country's dense rainforests. Its presence is strongly associated with the presence of water and is notable as a feline that enjoys swimming. The jaguar is a keystone species, playing an important role in stabilizing ecosystems.

## Student Governance

The MET Student Council is a student-based organization that promotes leadership as well as civic responsibility. When students participate in Student Council, they have the opportunity to demonstrate their involvement and commitment to school life. Student Council members plan and carry out fundraising events and awareness campaigns to enrich students' school experience by fostering a sense of community and school spirit.

As representatives of the MET student body, students interested in joining the Student Council must display exemplary academics, personal responsibility, and conduct. Just as we encourage all students to embody the IB Learner Profile Traits, we expect Student Council members to uphold these characteristics of internationally minded citizens. Students who want to run for Student Council can post signs around the school during the campaign week to highlight their personal qualifications. They can also pass out handmade items (no food related items) to encourage fellow students to vote for them. In order to develop public speaking skills, they prepare and deliver speeches to explain why they are the best candidates.

## Elementary School Student Leadership Team

The Elementary Student Leadership Team fosters the development of both school spirit and foundational leadership skills. Three core leaders are selected by their peers to lead the group of Grade 2 through Grade 5 class representatives. The team plans student-driven school activities to boost spirit, collaboration, and inclusiveness. They may also call for action from the student body to improve an aspect of school life or within the community. Teacher Advisors facilitate meetings, as well as all Student Leadership Team sponsored events. During the weekly meetings, the team members contribute ideas and opinions in order to make decisions that will best benefit the entire Elementary School student body.

## Secondary School Student Council

The MET secondary school has one student council. The key roles in the Secondary Student Council are:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Communications Director

Teacher Advisors facilitate meetings, as well as all Student Council sponsored events. During the weekly meetings, Student Council members contribute ideas and opinions in order to make decisions that will best benefit the entire student body.

# Support Services

## Student Study Team

Counseling, Learning Support, Occupational Therapy, and Speech and Language Therapy Services are available for Elementary and Secondary students. The Student Study Team is committed to helping our students be academically and socially successful. The Elementary Student Study Team consists of: the Principal, Assistant Principal, Curriculum Coordinator, Exceptional Education Coordinator, English as an Additional Language Coordinator, Counselors, Exceptional Education Specialists, Occupational Therapist, Speech and Language Therapist.

A student may be referred for support based on teacher observations and professional judgment, a range of educational data, current and/or prior school performance, educational assessments, and/or associated health professionals' evaluations.

## Counseling

### Overview

The counseling department at the MET provides a comprehensive service to the student body of the school. These services are aimed at meeting the needs of students in the following areas: academic, learning, social, emotional, college and career. Information is provided to our students through individual and group guidance.

The school counselors provide academic, career, college access, and social planning for all students. Students who require behavioral support receive individual support that includes pull out sessions with a counselor as well as activities in the classroom.

### Delivery System

The delivery system considers the activities, interactions and areas in which counselors work to provide the support to the school community, which includes: individual and small-group counseling; consultation to parents, teachers and administrators; crisis counseling; referrals to external professionals; and transitions support to families and students.

### Parent-School Collaboration

Parental collaboration is fundamental during the counseling process. Parents are allies in the implementation of many aspects of a student's behavioral plan. The counselor will communicate informally on a regular basis with any student receiving individual support. Additionally, there will be two formal meetings scheduled with parents:

- Assessment meeting: to collect information about the child's development and background.
- Progress meeting: to inform the parents about their child's progress after 3 months of interventions.

### Safeguarding

The Metropolitan School of Panama fully recognizes its responsibilities for child protection. Our guidelines apply to all staff, governors and volunteers working in the school. There are five main elements to our policy:

- Ensuring we practice safe recruitment in checking the suitability of staff to work with children.
- Raising awareness of child protection issues and equipping children with the skills needed to keep them safe.
- Developing and then implementing procedures for identifying and reporting cases, or suspected cases, of abuse.

- Supporting students who have been abused in accordance with his/her agreed child protection plan.
- Establishing a safe environment in which children can learn and develop.

All staff employed at the Metropolitan School of Panama must report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect whenever the staff member has reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse or neglect. Reporting and follow up of all suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect will proceed in accordance with administrative regulations respective to this policy.

The Metropolitan School of Panama endorses the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Our school seeks to be a safe environment for students who may be experiencing abuse or neglect in any aspect of their lives. This policy will be included in our staff, parent and student handbook. Annual training for all staff will occur and we make every effort to implement hiring practices to ensure the safety of children.

Read the full MET Safeguarding Policy [here](#).

### **Procedures for Reporting Abuse**

Where there is cause to suspect an incident of child abuse or neglect, it is the responsibility of the staff members to report their suspicions to the counselor responsible for that school section (Elementary or Secondary), or if the counselor is not available, to the Principal. In all cases, the Principal will be notified and then will inform the Head of School.

**Step 1** - The counselor will take initial steps to gather information regarding the reported incident. In all cases, follow-up activities will be conducted in a manner which ensures that information is documented factually and that strict confidentiality is maintained. The following procedure will be used:

1. Report to section Principal.
2. Discussion between the child and safeguarding staff member in order to gain more information.
3. In-class observations of the child by the teacher, counselor and/or administrator.
4. Interview staff members as necessary and document information relative to the case.
5. Consult with school personnel to review the child's history in the school.
6. Report status of case to the Head of School.
7. Determine the course of follow-up actions.

If the abuse or neglect allegation involves a staff or faculty member of the Metropolitan School of Panama, the divisional Principal will follow Nord Anglia Education policies to ensure ethical professional behavior.

**Step 2** - Based on acquired information, a plan of action will be developed to assist the child. Actions may include: ☒

1. Meeting with the family to present the school's concern and set action plan.
2. Referral of the student and family to external professional counseling.
3. Notification to the employer, if necessary.
4. Consultation with the consulate of the country of the involved family.
5. A consultation with a school attorney or other legal services.
6. Informal or formal consultation with local authorities.

## Physical Abuse

### Definition

Physical abuse is inflicting physical injury on a child by other than accidental means or creating a substantial risk of physical harm to a child's bodily functioning. It also includes committing acts that are cruel or inhumane regardless of observable injury. Such acts may include, but are not limited to instances of extreme discipline demonstrating a disregard of a child's pain and/or mental suffering. Physical abuse is also assaulting or criminally mistreating a child, engaging in actions or omissions resulting in injury, or creating a substantial risk to the physical or mental health or development of a child. Failure to take reasonable steps to prevent the occurrence of any of the above would also fall under the category of physical abuse.

### Indicators

- Unexplained bruises and welts on any part of the body
- Bruises of different ages (various colors)
- Injuries reflecting shape of article used (belt buckle, paddle or hand)
- Injuries that regularly appear after absence or vacation
- Unexplained burns, especially to soles, palms, back or buttocks
- Burns with pattern from an electric burner, iron or cigarette
- Rope burns on arms, legs, neck or torso
- Injuries inconsistent with information offered by the child
- Immersion burn with a distinct boundary line
- Unexplained lacerations, abrasions or fractures

## Sexual Abuse

### Definition

Nonconsensual sexual behavior by one person upon another. This includes both contact and non-contact forms. Contact action involves intentionally touching (either directly or through clothes) the genitals, anus, or breast of a child other than for hygiene or childcare purposes or forcing the child to

touch the adult in this manner. Non-contact sexual abuse includes making the child listen to or engage in inappropriate sexual talk or view sexually explicit materials.

### **Indicators**

Sexual knowledge, behavior or use of language not appropriate to age level

- Unusual interpersonal relationship patterns
- Venereal disease found in a child
- Evidence of physical trauma or bleeding to the oral, genital or anal areas
- Difficulty in walking or sitting
- Refusing to change into PE clothes or fear of bathrooms
- Running away from home and not giving any specific complaint
- Not wanting to be alone with an individual
- Pregnancy, especially at young age
- Extremely protective parents

## **Emotional Abuse**

### **Definition**

Any pattern of behavior that impairs the child's emotional development, sense of self-worth, or self-esteem such as constant criticism, threats, verbal rejection, name-calling, insults or put-downs on a regular basis. The non-verbal patterns of behavior can include isolation, ignoring, or rejection on a regular basis.

### **Indicators**

- Speech disorders
- Delayed physical development
- Substance abuse
- Asthma or severe allergies
- Sucking, biting or head banging
- Antisocial or destructive behaviors
- Sleep disorders
- Inhibition of play
- Passive or aggressive behaviors
- Developmental delay in academics
- Delay in fine or gross motor skills

## Neglect

### Definition

The action of not taking proper care of someone. This includes failure to provide food, shelter, appropriate supervision\*, medical care, or psychological treatment for a child.

### Indicators

- Unkempt appearance
- Often hungry
- Low academic performance
- An unwillingness to go home
- Depression
- Complaints of extended paternal absence\*

*\*When a parent leaves the child for an extended time, a guardian should be appointed. These occurrences must be reported to the Elementary or Secondary division office.*

### Long-term Effects of Abuse

- Impaired brain development
- Compromised cognitive and language abilities
- Poor academic performance
- Poor physical health
- Low self-esteem
- Depression
- Withdrawal
- Social Difficulties
- Alcohol/drug abuse
- Juvenile delinquency/adult criminality
- Violent behavior
- Abusive behavior
- Emotional or psychological problems
- Unwarranted guilt
- Anxiety
- Eating disorders
- Self-injurious behaviors
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Attachment difficulties

## Bullying Prevention

We strive to create a climate where everyone is valued, respected and appreciated. By creating a positive climate of camaraderie, we aim to avoid issues with bullying or cyberbullying. However, it must be said that at the MET, bullying will not be tolerated. We have therefore developed a policy statement to help us prevent incidents of bullying / cyberbullying and to guide the community in the event of such occurrences.

This policy statement includes the following components:

- The aims and objectives of the school in relation to bullying and cyberbullying.
- A clear definition of what behavior is considered to be bullying within the school.
- A clear definition of what behavior is considered to be cyber bullying within the school.
- A description of how bullying / cyber bullying is to be prevented.
- Procedures for staff, students, parents and Leadership who become aware of bullying / cyber bullying situations.
- The MET's response to cases of bullying / cyber bullying
- The MET's response to cases of cyberbullying
- Working with the bully and applying sanctions
- Message to students
- Message to parents and staff

The aim of the school is to prevent all forms of bullying / cyber bullying so that all students can live and work in a happy environment that is free from extraneous stresses. Bullying may include:

- a. Direct physical abuse
- b. Intimidation through the threat of physical abuse
- c. Actual or attempted extortion with or without menaces
- d. Theft or damage of personal property
- e. Name-calling, rumor-mongering and other verbal abuse
- f. Social exclusion or ostracism

## Cyber Bullying

The school recognizes and supports the fact that technology plays an important and positive role in children's lives, both educationally and socially. It is committed to helping all members of the school community to understand both the benefits and risks, and to equip students with the knowledge and skills to be able to use technology safely and responsibly.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, cellular

phone text messages (including WhatsApp or other messaging apps), digital pictures, or website postings (including blogs and social networks, e.g. Facebook, Instagram, etc.) which has the effect of:

- a. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
- b. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
- c. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- d. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with students who are involved in bullying others.
- e. Continued bullying or harassment may result in the offender being withdrawn from classes until a written Plan of Action is signed by both the Head of School and the parents and agreed and implemented.

### **The MET's response to cases of cyberbullying**

Most cases of cyberbullying will be dealt with through the above policy and the MET's Behavior Policy. Some features of cyberbullying differ from other forms of bullying and may prompt a particular response. The key differences are:

- Impact: the scale and scope of cyber bullying can be greater than other forms of bullying
- Targets and perpetrators: the people involved may have a different profile to traditional bullies and their targets
- Location: the 24/7 and 'anywhere' nature of cyber bullying
- Anonymity: the person being bullied will not always know who is bullying them
- Motivation: some students may not be aware that what they are doing is bullying
- Evidence: unlike other forms of bullying, the target of bullying will have evidence of its occurrence

The following actions will take place:

- If hurtful or embarrassing content is being distributed via the school server, we will get it removed from the web.
- If the person who posted it is known, the school will ensure they understand why it is wrong and ask them to remove it. Alternatively, we will contact the host provider and make a report to get the content taken down.
- If sent via a cellular phone, the school will confiscate the phone, ask the student to delete the offending content and say who they have sent it on to.
- The school investigation will include efforts to identify the individual who is harassing the student. There may be a way to track him or her through the Internet service provider, even if the individual is using a fake name or someone else's identity.

### **Working with the bully and applying sanctions**

The aim of the sanctions will be:

- To help the person harmed to feel safe again and be assured that the bullying / cyber bullying will stop;
- To hold the perpetrator to account, getting them to recognize the harm caused and deter them from repeating the behavior;
- To demonstrate to the school community that bullying / cyber bullying is unacceptable and that the school has effective ways of dealing with it, so deterring others from behaving similarly.

In applying sanctions, consideration will be given to the type and impact of bullying / cyberbullying and the possibility that it was unintentional or was in retaliation. The outcome will be restorative and include helping the bully to recognize the consequence of their actions and providing support to enable the attitude and behavior of the bully to change.

The MET emphasizes that we have a zero tolerance to all forms of bullying and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the school, offenders shall be subject to appropriate staff intervention, which may result in administrative discipline.

### **Message to students**

No member of our school community needs to accept behavior from others that she/he finds offensive. To all our students, including the very youngest, we explain appropriate behavior in these terms:

If someone else finds your behavior offensive, then what you are doing is against the Code of Conduct because it is not showing respect for the feelings and rights of others. In this case you should stop the offending behavior at once. If you are uncomfortable with the behavior of others – student or adult – towards you, or you find their behavior offensive, it is likely that there is something wrong with their behavior towards you. If you feel uncomfortable because of the behavior of another, you are advised to proceed with the following steps:

- Tell the person that you feel uncomfortable and ask him/her to stop it
- If the behavior continues, tell your teacher or another adult in school
- All such complaints will be taken seriously and listened to
- If someone is calling you names or making hurtful comments try to ignore them – walk away
- Do not retaliate by calling them names or hitting them – this will make matters worse and possibly get you in trouble instead. Tell your teacher. The bully should be the one who gets into trouble
- The teacher will talk to the offender and decide on a Plan of Action
- Your complaint and a Plan of Action will be written down and filed
- If the bad behavior continues after action has been taken by the school, you must tell your teacher or another adult immediately the incident occurs, or as soon as possible afterwards
- You must report every instance of continued bullying or harassment – not reporting will make the situation worse

- Remember: it is not your fault – you are not to blame. Bullies have no right to make you unhappy.

If you feel uncomfortable because of electronic information about you such as via e-mail messages, instant messages, cellular phone text messages (including SnapChat, TikTok and WhatsApp messages), digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs and social networks, e.g. Facebook), you are advised to:

- Follow the same process above.
- Do not respond in a derogatory manner to the cyber bully and save and print out the messages (with full email headers), save phone messages, record or save-and-print instant messenger conversations, print or produce a screen-grab of social network pages, print, save and forward to staff whole email messages or pictures as evidence rather than deleting them
- In some cases, you may be able to block the person bullying from your sites and services.

The MET views any form of verbal, electronic or physical harassment very seriously, including any form of sexual, racist, abusive or insulting remarks. Action will always be taken against offenders.

**Please**

**Note:**

Law 81 on Personal Data Protection safeguards the image and likeness of individuals. The unauthorized use of a person's image may be considered a violation of this right. Furthermore, the distribution of intimate images without consent may constitute gender-based violence and a criminal offense against personal freedom and privacy.

**Message to parents**

You can help by:

- Looking out for signs of distress – reluctance to go to school – headaches – loss of personal property – asking for extra pocket money
- Letting us know as soon as you have firm suspicions
- Taking an active interest in your child's social life and friendships
- Discussing what happens during breaks and the journeys to and from school
- Contacting your child's teacher if you are worried
- Trying to help your child recruit friends to make bullying less likely
- Informing the school if your child is coming home with other students' property – money from unidentified sources
- Understanding that bullies also need to be understood and appropriate action taken to help them conform to the Code of Conduct

If your child is being bullied, please do not encourage him/her to hit back; it will make matters worse. Staff at school will offer support – IF they know of your concerns. Teachers, Principals and the Head of School are willing to listen.

## College Counseling

The college counseling program at the MET is a comprehensive and individualized process. Individualized assessment and discussions begin in 10th grade, and by 11th grade a series of individual college counseling sessions take place, including family sessions to ensure the process is collaborative. Through personalized assessments, observations and individual sessions, the counselor provides advice to students in choosing the right major according to his or her interests and abilities. Every student meets the college counselor to evaluate grades, test scores, extracurricular activities, personal qualities, postsecondary budget and interests and, based on those factors, builds a list of best fit universities to which the student will apply. The counselor then helps guide students through the process of applying to colleges and universities around the world, supplying information for scholarships and financial aid opportunities.

The MET hosts regular university visits and fairs to expose students to a variety of post-secondary options. Assistance is also provided to students in finding specific gap year programs, university testing preparation courses, as well as summer program options.

The College Counseling Office is available to students and parents every day of the school year from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and on the weekends by appointment.

## English as an Additional Language

At the Metropolitan School of Panama we are committed to each child reaching their personal level of excellence. We offer English as an Additional Language (EAL) services to students that require additional language support. This enables them to be academically and socially successful at the MET while maintaining the integrity of each student's cultural identity and home language.

### Our EAL Approach

The MET's Universal Inclusion Model allows our English language learners (ELLs) equal access to the curriculum. Students remain immersed in their classroom and acquire the language alongside their grade-level peers. EAL specialists and homeroom teachers work together to provide differentiated learning instruction and individual support to students, helping ELLs acquire both content and language throughout their curricular day.

The language acquisition process is different for each learner and influenced by a number of factors. Some of these may include:

- The learner's developed fluency in their first language
- Exposure to a language-rich environment
- The learner's attitude towards learning a new language
- The learner's motivation to acquire independence and confidence in English
- English language learners will receive EAL services for a minimum of two academic years or until they achieve a high intermediate English level, and are ready to meet with their grade-level requirements.

### Our EAL Core Beliefs

- ELLs have the right to equal access to the curriculum
- ELLs should be immersed in their homeroom classroom as much as possible
- All teachers are EAL teachers
- ELLs have the right to keep their mother tongue

### Services

#### EAL Teachers provide:

- Scaffold and differentiated instruction during Language Arts, and/or Unit of Inquiry classes
- Mini-lessons for targeting specific needs
- Academic vocabulary to support in-class learning and participation
- Support to build the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing

#### EAL Tiers

Our support services vary based on students' language proficiency. The number of contact periods is based on their English level and accordingly, ELLs are grouped into the following levels of support:

- PYP EAL-I Individualized Small Group Instruction (8 periods per week)
- PYP EAL-IS Intensive Small Group Instruction (6 periods per week)
- PYP EAL-SS Strategic Small Group Instruction (3 periods per week)
- Secondary School EAL Strategic Small Group Instruction (3 periods per week)

#### Exit Criteria

ELLs will no longer receive EAL support when the following is met. The decision to exit a student from the program is solely at the school's discretion.

- Standardized language proficiency test results indicate they are at the high-intermediate English level

- A recommendation is made by the homeroom teacher and EAL specialist

## Placement

Upon admissions, all students entering 1<sup>st</sup> Grade and up are tested for English language proficiency. If the school considers that the student requires additional language support, placement within the EAL program is a prerequisite for admission, and additional fees for the EAL services will apply.

## Exceptional Education Program

To meet the diverse needs of our students, our Exceptional Education Program (EEP) offers support services for students with mild to moderate learning needs.

### Principles

The Exceptional Education Program (EEP) of the Metropolitan School of Panama has developed this SEN policy. The policy is based on the EEP principles and practices of the Metropolitan School of Panama and the International Baccalaureate Organization. It is intended to make clear to the whole school community the expectations and practices relating to the provision and delivery of the EEP across the whole student population. The policy has been developed from educational and pedagogical values and methodologies and represents a statement of intent that outlines the principles and practices for achieving educational goals.

The IB program(s) followed at the Metropolitan School of Panama are designed to allow students with social, emotional, behavioral and learning needs have access to the program content, however it is acknowledged that some students will still require extra support with accessing the curriculum or for following the protocols within the school's community.

### Philosophy

- EEP advocates for all students regardless of race, gender, age or need.
- The needs of the individual student and how best to develop the student to reach their full potential is at the core of our beliefs and is what drives the support that is provided.
- All program decisions will be collaborative and consultative in discussion with all relevant parties. The EEP will work with, and alongside, parents/carers giving careful consideration to their suggestions and comments.
- Processes of identifying and addressing students with needs will be clear, transparent and consistent.
- Confidentiality is the highest priority and sensitive information will only be shared with the appropriate members of the school community.
- The EEP recognizes the rights and voices of students and will encourage student participation in EEP processes wherever possible.
- The EEP is accountable for the delivery of the individual student's program and evidence will be provided for this point.

### IB expectations for schools regarding Special Educational Needs

The IB supports the following principles of an inclusive education:

- Inclusion is a process by which schools and others develop their cultures, policies and practices to include all students.
- An inclusive education service offers excellence and choice, incorporating the views of all stakeholders.
- The interests of all students must be safeguarded.
- The school community and other authorizing bodies should actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation.
- All students should have access to an appropriate education that affords them the opportunity to achieve their personal potential.
- With the right skills training, strategies and support, the majority of students with special educational needs can be successfully included in mainstream education.
- Mainstream education will not always be appropriate for every student all the time. Equally, just because mainstream education may not be appropriate at a particular stage, it does not prevent the student from being included successfully at any other stage.

## Universal Inclusion Model

The MET's Universal Inclusion Model has been developed by combining research based inclusion programs including Response to Intervention and is designed to support students based on their individual and specific needs. Our services follow a multi-tiered approach that encourages each student's success through frequent progress monitoring and instructional interventions, personalized to the child's personal level.

## EEP Services

We provide guidance and support to students with learning needs who may perform at grade level with accommodations and guidance. Our services are personalized to each student, matching each child's specific needs with the appropriate strategies to enable them to reach their individual goals.

Our team has an interdisciplinary team that works together to the different needs of our students, as well as counselors that cater to the socio-emotional needs of our students. Our team is qualified to conduct evaluations and screenings to help identify needs. In some cases we may recommend external evaluations.

## Support Tiers

We offer four general support tiers that may vary depending on our students' needs:

- EEP Strategic Support (SS): small group support that happens inside the classroom.
- EEP Intensive Support (IS): a mix of pull-out sessions and in-classroom support.
- EEP Individual (I): a mix of pull-out sessions and in-classroom support that includes 1-to-1 and small group support.

- **Diverse needs:** our interdisciplinary EEP team, under very special or particular conditions, may modify the type of support offered in order to make them more suitable for a student's specific need.

This program comes with an additional cost, depending on level of support. Placement is reviewed each trimester and students may move between the tiers as they meet existing requirements.

### **EEP Referral**

If a teacher or parent recognizes a consistent need or problem exhibited by a student, the teacher is required to collect evidence of the identified difficulty and present this evidence to the EEP Coordinator and/or EEP specialist member. Upon receipt of the relevant information, the EEP will use the necessary resources to provide basic strategies to better support the student's individual needs.

The teachers' use of the given strategies is monitored and documented by the EEP and if the strategies do prove ineffective, an initial observation of the student will take place in the classroom setting by an EEP specialist. The EEP will record information. A plan of action will be devised and implemented.

Action plans may include a request that parents provide Educational Psychological Evaluations, counseling or other forms of testing. EEP Support Agreement papers are signed for the appropriate level of service and related additional fees. A copy of any signed agreement requiring additional fees is forwarded to the Accounting Department.

With the collaboration of all interested parties including the students (where appropriate) and parents, an Academic Accommodation Report (AAR) or Individual Education Plan (IEP) is created. Such documents contain information about the support provided when the support happens and appropriate goals to help move the student forward. An EEP specialist member will remain in bi-weekly contact with the teacher and parents to provide an update of student progress. Evidence of progress is collected throughout the year and trimestral goals are set and reviewed by the EEP.

### **EEP Administration Procedures**

EEP students are assigned to a case manager. The case manager is responsible to ensure that the correct documentation is recorded and managed to include; cover summary of the student on file, all relevant minutes of meetings, referral documentation, student reviews, AAR/IEP documents originals, and all testing results. The case manager needs to ensure that student files are regularly reviewed and updated.

### **EEP Transitions Procedure**

New students to EEP will receive a welcome letter from the EEP and their case manager. To foster a smooth transition, including those within the school, a transition plan is created. The EEP and all staff members working with the student will be involved. All entering and exiting students/parents will have access to a website of resources to assist with the delicate process of transition.

### **Exiting Students from the Program**

Where students have met and/or exceeded goal expectations repeatedly and demonstrated improved independence, they may be recommended for a decrease in tier level of services or even exited from the program over time. A recommendation must be discussed with the grade level team and the EEP Coordinator. If all are in agreement, a meeting is to be called with the parents to discuss, provide work samples and endorse the agreement.

### **EEP in the Diploma Program**

IB DP expectations for schools regarding Special Educational Needs are outlined in the program standards and practices.

#### **Standard A: Philosophy**

9. The school supports access for students to the IB program(s) and philosophy

#### **Standard A: Philosophy (Diploma Program specific requirements)**

9a. The school provides for the full DP and requires some of its student body to attempt the full diploma and not only individual diploma courses.

9b. The school promotes access to the diploma and diploma courses for all students who can benefit from the educational experiences they provide

9c. The school has strategies in place to encourage students to attempt the full diploma

#### **Standard B1: Leadership and structure (Diploma Program specific requirements)**

5c. The school develops and implements an inclusion/special educational needs policy that is consistent with IB expectations and with the schools admissions policy.

#### **Standard C1: Collaborative planning**

6. Collaborative planning and reflection incorporates differentiation for students learning needs and cycles.

#### **Standard C3: Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning differentiates instruction to meet students' learning needs and styles

# Child Safeguarding

## Health Services

### School Nurse

The school is equipped with two nurse's rooms (one for ES and one for SS students) and employs two full time certified nurses on the premises from 7:30 am - 4:30 pm. The infirmary provides adequate facilities to handle accidents and minor emergency situations for students, staff and visitors.

If a student has a major injury requiring medical attention, the school nurse will immediately notify the emergency services contracted by the school, parents, the homeroom teacher and relevant section principal. If either parent cannot be reached, the school nurse will proceed to contact the persons registered as the child's emergency contacts.

### Student Health Profile

Committed to ensuring our students' health and wellbeing, we have implemented child safeguarding procedures that will allow us to continue providing a safe and healthy school environment for all of our students. All parents must complete a Health Profile online via a survey form. Completing these forms will allow us to have the most up-to-date information regarding key items during a health situation:

- Parent contact information
- Emergency contact information
- Health Profile
- Medical Consent Form

Parents will be responsible for updating this information regularly if changes arise in any of these key points throughout the year. Being thorough in entering this information will allow us to maintain your child's medical and emergency profile complete and relevant, as well as ensure that the correct measures are put into place to best support our students.

We ask parents to please complete each section carefully and thoroughly to include **all** health conditions (including allergies, asthma, and/or any disease or condition that may require immediate medical support) and medications. It will be the parents' responsibility to ensure that these records are maintained current and up to date.

## Administering Medication

### Over the Counter Medication

We will only administer over the counter (OTC) medication in our nurse's office as needed, so long as there is registered parent consent. Parents may submit their consent online via survey form and indicate which OTC medications may be administered.

Any medication taken at school may only be administered by the nurse. Epi-Pens and asthma inhalers should be accompanied by a doctor's note and consent from parents.

### Prescription Medication

If a student requires that a prescription medication be administered during the school day, parents must first complete the online consent form through a survey form and provide the nurse with a **written doctor's note** indicating the medication that needs to be administered and its dosage. The parent must provide the medication in its original packaging, clearly labeled with the dose and frequency. Students will not be allowed to keep medications with themselves at school.

Prescription medication shall only be received by the school if:

- It comes in its original packaging
- It complies exactly with the administration procedure indicated in the doctor's note
- It has at least 9 months left of useful life
- The school has the necessary conditions to store the medication as per the specifications of the product
- All doctors' prescriptions will expire on the last day of the school year and every new school year requires a new prescription from the doctor.
- Medication will not be stored after the school year ends. Medication will be returned to parents on the last week of school

## Diseases or Infections

Parents are required to report to our school nurse all cases of infectious diseases like strep throat, measles, mumps, rubella, flu, and lice, among others. The nurse may be contacted via email at, [nurse@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:nurse@themetropolitanschool.com) and all information will be treated confidentially.

## Health Care

### Nuts

We are a nut-free school. Members of our community may not bring any items to school that include or may include nuts.

### **Head Lice**

The school will notify parents when a situation with lice arises so they can proceed with a thorough revision of their children at home. If lice are present, students' parents will be contacted to pick up the child from school. Parents must apply and continue to treat lice at home.

### **Illnesses during School Hours**

If the school nurse considers that a child should go home early, parents will be asked to pick up their children as soon as possible; sick students are not allowed to ride on the school bus. If a student goes home early, parents are asked to sign their child out through the nurse's office. For Secondary School students, parents may give verbal approval for their child to go home alone.

### **Injuries during School Hours**

Any student who is injured during school hours (7:30 am – 4:40 pm) will be evaluated by the school nurse and will receive first aid immediately. In case of a major injury, emergency services contracted by the school will be contacted. Parents will be informed. If either parent cannot be reached, the school nurse will proceed to contact the persons registered as the child's emergency contacts.

### **Medical Emergencies**

In the event of a medical emergency or accident and a parent or guardian cannot be reached, the student will be taken to the most appropriate medical facility. In certain circumstances, an ambulance may be necessary for transport. Fees resulting from the above will be the responsibility of the parent.

### **When to Keep Children at Home**

School Nurses often get questions as to when to keep children home from school in case of illness. Listed below are some standard guidelines.

If a student is absent due to illness, the relevant Section's Offices must be contacted via email at: [elementaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:elementaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com) or [secondaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:secondaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com).

### **Fever**

Please keep your child at home if their temperature is 100 degrees (37.5 Celsius) or higher. While at home, encourage your child to drink plenty of liquids. Your child should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

### **Bad Cough/Cold Symptoms**

Children with bad coughs need to stay home and possibly see a doctor. It could be a severe cold or possibly bronchitis, flu, or pneumonia. But when the cough improves, and your child is feeling better, then it's back to school. Don't wait for the cough to disappear entirely -- that could take a week or longer!

### **Diarrhea or Vomiting**

Please keep your child home until the illness is over, and for 24 hours after the last episode (without medicine).

### **Sore Throat**

A minor sore throat is usually not a problem, but a severe sore throat could be strep throat even if there is no fever. Other symptoms of strep throat in children are headache and an upset stomach. Please keep your child home from school and contact a doctor. Your child will need a special test to determine if it is strep throat. He or she can return to school 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins.

### **Eye Infections (Conjunctivitis)**

Please keep your child at home until a doctor has given the all clear to return to school. Pink eye is highly contagious and a virus, which will not respond to an antibiotic, in most cases. Bacterial conjunctivitis will require an antibiotic; your doctor will be able to determine if this is the case.

### **Rash**

Children with a skin rash should see a doctor, as this could be one of several infectious diseases. One possibility is impetigo, a bacterial skin infection that is very contagious and requires antibiotic treatment. Also, fifth disease is a contagious viral illness spread by coughs and sneezes; it's no longer contagious by the time the rash appears. Please do not send your child to school when symptoms of illness are present.

### **Reportable Illnesses**

Please notify the school nurse if your child contracts any contagious diseases, including but not limited to: strep throat, conjunctivitis, head lice, impetigo, Fifth's disease, chicken pox, measles, whooping cough, mononucleosis, scabies, mumps or scarlet fever.

### **Post-Illness School Attendance Guidelines**

Children must be fever free without medication and symptom free (vomiting, diarrhea) for 24 hours before returning to school. Before a child can return to school, strep throat, impetigo and conjunctivitis requires 24 hours of medication. In the case of chickenpox, all lesions must have scabbed over for 5-7 days before your child can return to school.

To provide the healthiest school environment possible, according to guidelines set by the American Academy of Pediatrics, no child will be allowed to remain in school if any of the following conditions are present: temperature above 100 degrees (37.5 Celsius), persistent cough or undiagnosed skin rash.

## Security and Child Safety

### Safety Protocols

The school's Security Team ensures that all fire, life, and safety regulations and procedures are implemented to ensure the wellbeing of all students and staff. The school is also in compliance with MEDUCA and local laws regarding safety and security.

The school's Operations Team ensures that:

- All exit doors are clearly labeled
- All evacuation routes meet the Fire Department's regulations and local laws
- Fire extinguishers are located in hallways
- Regular maintenance is conducted on alarm switches and smoke detectors

### Evacuation Plans & Emergency Drills

All rooms contain explicit directions to support and facilitate evacuations from the school facility. These routines are practiced throughout the school year for effectiveness. Our students and staff practice emergency drills regularly, which are conducted both with prior notice as well as without prior notice. In the case of an evacuation off-campus, parents will be notified with accompanying information and directions.

### Visiting Procedures

The MET is a closed building with visitors entering the school from 7:30am to 4:30pm and must report to a security guard with ID. Parents and students are only allowed to enter the building during regular school hours unless there is a scheduled activity. All parents will be asked to report at the front desk, sign-in and receive a visitor badge upon arriving at the school.

### Picking up Students

If you wish to collect your child personally, you are asked to follow the pick-up procedures in our [logistics document](#). Parents may be requested to provide ID to collect their child.

If a student is being removed during school hours, parents will need to inform the school in writing in advance (and before 12:00pm if they ride the bus to [bus@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:bus@themetropolitanschool.com)). Please write to

your child's homeroom teacher if your child is in Elementary School ([elementaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:elementaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com)) and to the Secondary office ([secondaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:secondaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com)) if your child is in Secondary School. Parents will need to sign a logbook in the front desk upon collecting the student.

### **Different Arrangements**

If you have arranged for another person to collect your child, it is very important that the school is aware in advance of this, by 12pm. Please write to [bus@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:bus@themetropolitanschool.com) as well as to your child's homeroom teacher and section office. Staff will not release students into the care of another adult without prior notification from the child's parent.

## **Accident Insurance**

The MET offers accident insurance to all students, which fully covers any accidental emergency events that occur at school. This insurance is offered through *Compañía de Seguros ASSA*.

### **Emergency Medical Procedures**

If an incident occurs, the student will first be taken to our school nurse to determine further action. If deemed a medical emergency that requires further medical attention, the school nurse will complete an ASSA claim form to be presented at Hospital (with the exception of Hospital Nacional) within the first 48 hours after the incident has occurred. There will be no need for parents to manage any type of reimbursement with the insurance company or through the school. If parents choose to use any other hospital, parents will be responsible for placing a \$50.00 copayment.

If any student is attended at a medical center without the pre-filled form, parents will be responsible for covering the medical bill and managing reimbursements directly with the insurance company. Parents must provide all documents to the school nurse to assist in claims.

### **Non-emergency Medical Procedures**

If a doctor prescribes specialized medical treatment, parents will need to complete a form and submit it to the insurance company for pre-approval. Once approved, the insurance company will notify the doctor and legal guardian with the percentage covered under insurance, as well as the corresponding portion that will be assumed financially by the family. The insurance company does not guarantee coverage without this procedure taking place.

## Transportation Services

### Overview

The MET offers transportation services to students living in the city of Panama through a bus service contract with an external provider. The MET has established strict guidelines and requirements for every bus that serves on our routes, and the school directly monitors the compliance with these requirements, including the mechanical conditions of the buses and the safety and driving record of each of the bus drivers.

According to the school's daily schedule, several bus routes will cover different areas of the city. Due to the transient nature of our international community, it is important to note that bus schedules and routes are subject to change throughout the year as we periodically face changes in the number of bus riders, which require us to expand or consolidate bus routes. While our Transportation Services serve the same areas, bus allocation is likely to vary as not all students depart school at the same time.

### Students with cars

Parking on campus is considered a privilege for students and is subject to school policies and regulations.

To obtain authorization to use the school parking facilities, **students must complete the [Parking Application Form](#)** and submit all required documents (including a valid driver's license and proof of insurance).

Additionally, **parents/guardians are required to complete and sign the [Student Parking Agreement](#)**. This agreement confirms their understanding of the responsibilities, safety guidelines, and liability waivers associated with student parking.

Only students who have submitted both forms and received approval may bring their vehicle to school and park in the designated student parking areas. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in the loss of parking privileges.

### Terms and Conditions

To enroll in our school's Transportation Services, all parents must complete an online form agreeing to the following Terms and Conditions. The MET does not directly provide bus transportation services. Instead, these services are subcontracted. For the purpose of facilitating transportation services for its students, the MET has entered into an agreement with an external provider to offer transportation services to students enrolled at the MET.

### Duration of Transportation Services

For students enrolled in Early Childhood 3 to 11th grade, the term of this Transportation Agreement will be eleven (11) months. For students enrolled in 12th grade, the term of this Transportation Agreement will be ten (10) months.

### Transportation Fees

The monthly transportation fees for Transportation Services for the Academic Year are published on our website. These transportation fees remain the same whether the student travels round-trip or one-way. Parents shall pay the MET in concept of Transportation Fees on a monthly basis within the first fifteen (15) calendar days of each month via check, cash or wire transfer to the school's account.

Upon enrolling in the program, parents agree to comply with the following obligations:

- Pay the applicable Transportation Fees in accordance with the terms and conditions signed upon enrolling in the program.
- Inform the school's Transportation Coordinator ([bus@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:bus@themetropolitanschool.com)) of any variations in routes and schedules in advance.
- Allow the Transporters' vehicle that will be used for the provision of the Bus Services to access the parents' home facilities within the hours in which the Bus Service is being provided.

### Behavior Expectations

All school policies and behavior expectations apply inside the school buses as the student travels to and from the MET. Students that fail to follow instructions may receive up to three (3) warnings, which can lead to suspension of Bus Services for up to twenty-four (24) hours, as well as behavioral consequences defined by the school.

In case of continuous misconduct, the MET reserves the right to cancel the student's enrollment from the Bus Services, providing written notice and without the need of any legal action or court order.

### Changes of Transportation

All changes to the transportation arrangement must be communicated via email to [bus@metropolitanschool.com](mailto:bus@metropolitanschool.com) as well as to the child's homeroom teacher or division administration by 12:00 p.m. These changes may include absence in the bus due to lateness, early departure, or change in the means of transport. If the MET does not receive a notification as indicated above, changes will not be accommodated and the student will be expected to use the habitual transportation.

### Termination of Services

This Transportation Agreement applies to the full 2025-2026 school year (from August 2025 until June 2026) and may not be terminated unless:

- The student permanently leaves the MET for reasons of moving abroad, or
- The student transfers to another school.

In these cases, the contracting party must notify the Transportation Coordinator of the circumstances by email at [bus@metropolitanschool.com](mailto:bus@metropolitanschool.com) within thirty (30) days of anticipation, in order to terminate the Transportation Agreement and end the Bus Services.

## Use of Transportation Services

### General Expectations

- All school expectations for student behavior at school apply to the journey to and from school. In case of continuous misconduct, the MET reserves the right to cancel the student's enrollment from the Bus Services, providing written notice
- Only students over the age of 12 may sit in the front seat of the bus
- No music (radio) is allowed on the school buses
- No food or drink on the buses
- iPads may be used on the buses but no photos or videos can be taken. NOTE: iPads may be withheld from a student for the duration of a journey if transport staff observes them being used inappropriately or if they cause disruption. All content viewed must be respectful to all ages.

### Route Allocation

Every bus route is carefully coordinated to minimize the journey time for all students on the bus. If your child takes part in the school's bus service, you will be informed of an estimated pick-up time/drop-off time for your child.

Inclusion of a new student to a bus route will be made effective 2 working days after the parent's request for transportation services. This will allow our Bus Coordinator to adjust the bus route accordingly and announce the changes to parents of students in that route. The school asks that parents understand that traffic and other circumstances may result in the bus pick-up/drop-off times varying.

### Morning Procedures (Pick-Up)

To ensure a swift pick-up process, parents are asked to ensure students are waiting for the bus at their estimated time outside their house or apartment. To ensure that the bus arrives in good time to the school in the morning, buses will only wait 3 minutes for students who are not ready at the appointed pick-up time.

### Afternoon Procedures (Dismissal home)

We currently offer 2 different bus departure schedules, 15 minutes after classes end:

Date	Grade	Detail
Monday - Thursday	All students	Early Pick up must be NO later than 2:30 p. m., as we need to keep them to the minimum to avoid discomfort from other parents that have been making their pick-up line.
Friday	EC & Elementary	Early Pick up can be no later than 1:00 p.m.
Friday	Secondary	Dismissal starts at 12:45 p. m. Their lunch is optional if parents want to pick them up earlier or are car users.

As the number of students staying for ECAs and in our Athletic Program varies, afternoon bus routes are subject to differ from morning routes.

### Dismissal Procedures for Athletics

- Before leaving the building, students must change their clothes and fill up their water bottles. Students must wear their physical education uniform, or similar attire to change into for after school practices. Students cannot practice in their school uniforms.
- Students should leave backpacks in areas designated by the coach, outside the athletics office or in the pool area.
- During practices and games at school, access to the school building is limited and strictly under the permission of coaching and athletics department staff.
- Students should bring an additional set of clothes/shoes to change into before getting on the bus. Bus monitors will not let students on the after school bus if their clothes are muddy or wet. A change of clothes after the activity is required.
- Shoes with mud are not allowed inside the building.
- Students should wait quietly with their coach for practice to start.

### Late Departures

If a bus departs from school later than the times outlined above, parents will be informed by the Bus Coordinator via email.

### **Dropping students off**

To ensure that all students arrive home quickly, transport staff will follow the following procedure if there is no one waiting to collect a student from the bus on the return journey at the appointed drop-off time.

1. The doorbell or intercom will be used to alert parents that the bus has arrived.
2. The parent will be contacted via their emergency contact number.
3. The bus coordinator will be notified.
4. The bus will continue its route and arrangements will be made with the individual parents to collect the children once the rest of the route has been completed and all other students have been dropped-off.
5. The student will be returned to school if no arrangements are made.

### **Buses involved in Traffic Accidents**

If a bus is involved in a minor incident to or from school, parents will be informed via WhatsApp group chat. If a bus is involved in a minor incident that results in a police report being requested or results in mechanical difficulties, the transport coordinator will arrange for another bus to go to the incident site to collect the students. A WhatsApp chat will be sent to parents via the bus group informing them of the situation.

If a bus is involved in a minor incident that results in a police report being filed, the bus driver must present a copy of the report to the school. The school will record and follow the court's findings following this.

### **Behavior Expectations on the Bus**

Below are the behavior expectations for students who travel to and from school on the school buses. You are asked to spend some time discussing these expectations with your child/ren.

1. Show respect to everyone who rides the bus with you: the monitors, the driver and your schoolmates.
2. Listen to and follow any instructions given by the drivers or the monitors.
3. Do not eat or drink on the bus: save all snacks for home/school.
4. Always use an indoor voice when talking to friends on the bus.
5. Always address everyone you speak to in a polite, well-mannered way, remembering to use the words 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate.
6. Always keep your seatbelt fastened when sitting in your seat.

7. Only move from your seat when you have reached your destination and the bus has come to a complete stop.
8. Do not intentionally bother other passengers who ride the bus with you and be sure to keep your hands and your feet to yourself during the journey.
9. Students riding the bus after an athletic activity may not board the bus if they are wet or muddy. Students are expected to bring a change of clothes after the sport activity prior to riding the bus.

To ensure that all students have a safe and enjoyable journey to and from school, the school has a strict behavior monitoring system in relation to the bus service.

## **Cumulative Consequences**

### **First monitor report**

- The child's homeroom Teacher will be informed and will receive a written report from the bus monitor (yellow slip).
- The student will be required to explain to his/her teacher what happened and account for his/her choices and behavior.
- The student will be asked to consider how s/he would do things differently given the chance all over again.
- The homeroom teacher will inform the parents of the students involved.

### **Second monitor report**

- The child's homeroom teacher and the Section Principal will be informed and will receive written reports from the bus monitor (yellow slips).
- The student will be required to explain to both his/her teacher and the Section Principal what happened, and account for his/her choices and behavior.
- The student will be asked to consider how s/he would do things differently given the chance all over again.
- The homeroom Teacher will inform the parents of the students involved.
- The student will be required to write up a self-reflection on the situation/incident and this will be placed in the student's file.

### **Third monitor report**

- The child's homeroom teacher and Section Principal will be informed and will receive written reports from the bus monitor (yellow slips).
- The student will be required to explain to both his/her teacher and the Section Principal what happened, and account for his/her choices and behavior.

- The student will be asked to consider how s/he would do things differently given the chance all over again.
- The Section Principal will inform the parents of the students involved.
- The student will be required to write up a self-reflection on the situation/incident and this will be placed in the student's file.
- The student will receive a bus suspension (number of days will be determined according to the severity of the incident/situation) and a note of the suspension will be placed in his/her file.

#### **Fourth monitor report**

- The child's homeroom teacher and the Section Principal will be informed and will receive written reports from the bus monitor (yellow slips).
- The student will be required to explain to both his/her teacher and the Section Principal what happened, and account for his/her choices and behavior.
- The student will be asked to consider how s/he would do things differently given the chance all over again.
- The Section principal will inform the parents of the students involved.
- The student will be required to write up a self-reflection on the situation/incident and this will be placed in the student's file.
- The student's bus privileges will be suspended indefinitely and a note of the suspension placed in the student's file.

Use of the bus service is a privilege and not a right. Not meeting the above expectations may result in the indefinite exclusion from the bus service, and parents will need to make alternative arrangements for student transportation to and from school.

#### **Notification of Changes in Transport**

Please inform your child's teacher and the corresponding school office (ES or SS) via the following email address of ANY changes to your child's transport arrangements:

[bus@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:bus@themetropolitanschool.com) and ([elementaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:elementaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com) or [secondaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com](mailto:secondaryoffice@themetropolitanschool.com)). Changes cannot be made unless the school receives confirmation via email no later than 12:00pm.

#### **Students Going Home with Another Student**

The school is happy to place a student who normally uses the school transport on another bus if the parent has arranged for them to travel home with another student. However this will only be possible if there is a seat available and from Monday to Thursday. Parents are asked to notify the school of this

change before the times indicated above. Please note that changes cannot be made on Friday due to early dismissal.

# Annex

## School Terms and Abbreviations

Below you will find a list of educational terms and acronyms often used at the MET:

- **ATL:** Approached to Teaching & Learning skills
- **AASSA:** Association of American Schools in South America
- **CAS:** Creativity, Action and Service, a component of the Diploma Program for 11th and 12th grade students
- **CIS:** Council of International Schools – CIS is a global membership organization for elementary and secondary schools that are committed to offering a high quality international and multicultural education and are focused on developing students to be global citizens.
- **CR:** Class Representatives
- **DP:** Diploma Program is a two-year educational program within the International Baccalaureate Curriculum offered in 11th and 12th grade.
- **EAL:** English as an Additional Language
- **Early Childhood (EC):** includes levels Early Childhood 3, Early Childhood 4 and Kinder.
- **ECA:** Extra-curricular Activities – These activities are offered to our students from 1st through 12th grade after our regular school day. These classes are optional and students will have a wide array of activities to choose from.
- **ECIS:** European Council of International Schools
- **Elementary School (ES):** includes Early Childhood 3 through 5th grade.
- **EEP:** Exceptional Educational Program
- **ELL:** English Language Learner
- **IB:** International Baccalaureate is the curriculum implemented at the MET. It offers three programs for students aged 3-19 that seek to develop an internationally minded person.
- **IBO:** International Baccalaureate Organization is an international non-governmental organization that oversees the implementation of the IB Curriculum and its goals.

- **IEP:** Individualized Educational Plan – IEPs will be developed by our Exceptional Educational Department to meet our students’ specific educational needs.
- **Learner Profile:** The IB Learner Profile is the common ground on which IB schools stand. These include 10 attributes that IB seeks to develop in students and illustrate the qualities of an internationally minded person and lifelong learners.
- **LT:** Leadership Team
- **MEDUCA:** Panama’s Ministry of Education
- **MYP:** Middle Years Program is an educational program within the International Baccalaureate Curriculum offered from 6th through 10th grade.
- **NAE:** Nord Anglia Education
- **NEASC:** New England Association of Schools and Colleges - an accrediting organization that is dedicated to promote excellence in education through thorough self-evaluation, peer reviews and standards.
- **PAIS:** Panamanian Association of International Schools - an organization in Panama of international schools that collaborate and share best practices.
- **PC:** Parent Council
- **PYP:** Primary Years Program is an educational program within the International Baccalaureate Curriculum offered from Early Childhood 3 through 6th grade.
- **SAL:** Spanish as an Additional Language
- **Secondary School (SS):** includes 6th grade through 12th grade.
- **SLT:** Senior Leadership Team